Court orders Jinggoy back to hospital arrest

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2001 ★★ 66 PAGES 6 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 194 ₱15

Officer hints at Palace hand in Dacer murder

BY DAVE VERIDIANO

SUPT. GLENN Dumlao has executed an affidavit that Malacañang and former police chief Panfilo Lacson may have known of the "special operation" of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) that led to the abduction and murders of public relations practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his

OFFICER/ A20

GMA says sorry to kidnap victim

President meets with Cheng family in Malacañang

IT WAS big of President Macapagal-Arroyo, shown here at a fete in Vigan, to take back the hurt of careless words. JOAN BONDOC

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

OOPS, it was a kidnapping after all.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has apologized to the daughter of a Chinese-Filipino businessman and her family for insinuating that her abduction was staged to embarrass the government.

In a press statement, the President said she had met with the family of Mary Grace Rosagas who was kidnapped on Monday morning, together with her driver and a bodyguard. They were released 17 hours later after her family reportedly paid the kidnappers P10 million in ransom.

Rosagas is the daughter of Robert Cheng, a noted golf patron and owner of Uratex Philippines Inc. that makes plastic furniture and foam products.

"I have talked to the Cheng family in Malacañang to tell them that I was saddened by the allegations made in connection with the kidnapping of Mary Grace," Ms Macapagal said in Filipino.

"I explained to them why I revealed the report regarding the plot of some people to destabilize my government. And I apologized to the Cheng family," she added.

The press statement did not say when the meeting was held, but presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said it must have taken place on Wednesday.

Anti-crime crusader Teresita Ang-See, a prominent leader of the Chinese-Filipino community, reportedly arranged the meeting between the President and the Cheng family.

After Rosagas, her driver and a security aide were released early Tuesday morning, Ms Macapagal and Interior Secretary Jose Lina voiced suspicions that the kidnapping may have been part of a sinister plot to destabilize her administration.

Without naming names, Lina added that the leader of the kidnap gang was "definitely a person from the opposition who had links to the previous administration.

In her press statement on Thursday night, however, Ms

GMA/ A18

WITH war at the doorstep, life still goes on for this poor family selling bananas and coal for a living in Lamitan, Basilan. DENNIS SABANGAN

Priest says gov't ransomed him for ₱2M

BY JULIE ALIPALA-INOT
PDI Mindanao Bureau
AND CARLITO PABLO

LAMITAN, Basilan—The Ramos administration paid P2 million to the Abu Sayyaf in exchange for the release of a Catholic priest taken captive in 1994.

Fr. Cirilo Nacorda, who, along with 69 others, was abducted in 1994 by a bandit group led by the late Commander Abdurajak Janjalani, made the disclosure yesterday. He said his kidnappers told him of the supposed P2-million payment.

"Maybe it's true because I saw two big black bags given to the Abu Sayyaf when (the negotiators took me into custody)," Nacorda told the INQUIRER.

He named the negotiators as retired Gen. Eduardo Ermita and then Vice President Joseph Estrada.

The Abu Sayyaf took Nacorda and the 69 others from Barangay Matarling in Lantawan town. Fifteen were summarily executed while the others were held captive and released allegedly after payment of ransom.

The priest, who was held captive for 61 days, said that aside from the supposed ransom, his kidnappers set conditions for his release.

He said these included his marrying a

PRIEST/ A20

Letters from the edge: Talk peace, not war

BY ARLYN DE LA CRUZ
AND JULIET L. JAVELLANA

THE BROTHERS Janjalani have each written a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, one from Hector Janjalani from the Camp Crame jail; the other from his younger brother, Khadaffy, from somewhere in the jungles of Basilan.

Though a world apart, the brothers speak of the same thing: Let's talk of peace.

Hector in his two-page handwritten letter offered to negotiate for the release of the hostages still being held by the Abu Sayyaf led by his brother, Khadaffy, without payment of ransom.

"If there were Janjalanis who contributed to the deterioration of our nation, it is not impossible that another Janjalani may be instrumental in achieving peace for our country," Hector said in his letter which was delivered yesterday to the Palace by Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane.

In his letter, Hector mentioned "I can help" three times. He also wrote in Fili-

LETTERS/ A20

Loren: 47 Chinoys have fallen prey to kidnap-for-ransom gangs this year

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

TO BOLSTER claims of a rising tide of criminality, the Chinese-Filipino community said 47 of its members had been kidnapped over the past six months in Metro Manila alone, Sen. Loren Legarda disclosed yesterday.

Legarda said the number of Chinese-Filipino victims was disclosed to her by representatives of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FFCCCI), who went to see her last week to express concern over the increasing number of kidnapping cases in the metropolis.

The FFCCCI's revelation came a day after Malacañang disclosed that the crime index had dropped 10 percent during the first five months of the year compared with the same period last year.

"According to them, not all (47 kidnappings) have been reported to the police since January and to them that's an alarming situation," Legarda told reporters.

"They have come to me, perhaps, among many others, to express their concern and to ask what the government can do to help protect them from the rising (tide of) criminality in Manila," the senator said.

She said the 47 kidnapping cases were as of last week and did not include the abduction on Monday of Mary Grace Cheng Rosagas, daughter of Robert Cheng who owns Uratex Foam Inc.

Rosagas returned home 17 hours after her reported abduction inside the University of the Philippines campus in Quezon City.

The kidnapping prompted President Macapagal-Arroyo to say that it could be the handiwork of her political enemies out to destabilize her administration.

Asked about allegations that the kidnappings

LOREN/ A21

RP kids unhappy, says Unicef study

ONLY a few Filipino children can say that they are happy most of the time compared to their counterparts in other countries in East Asia and the Pacific, according to the results of a survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund.

The Unicef said the relatively widespread unhappiness among Filipino children could be a result of their higher exposure to domestic violence, with more than half of the 500 Filipino respondents reporting instances of "screaming" and "hitting" at home.

The survey, "Speaking Out! Voices of Children and Adolescents in East Asia and the Pacific," had about 10,000 respondents in Australia, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Burma, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The Unicef said the sample was representative—in terms of age, gender, area (urban/rural) and socioeconomic status—of some 300 million people in the 9-17 age bracket. It said that the survey was believed to be the largest and most comprehensive hearing of the views of young people ever in the region, and that it had a sampling error of plus or minus 1.2 percent.

The survey found that half the number of Filipino children 9-17 years old had been victims of fighting, nearly one-third (27 percent) had been robbed in their communities, one-fourth (25 percent) had been threatened, and 13 percent had been subjected to assault.

The Unicef defined "fighting" in this context as violence at home and the immediate environment.

RP/ A21

Jinggoy: I paid the price for a hug

BY VOLT CONTRERAS,
CATHY C. YAMSUAN
AND ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

"THAT is the price that I have to pay for visiting my 96-year-old grandmother."

Outgoing San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada played the martyr yesterday after an angry Sandiganbayan punished him for "flagrant violations" of his five-day detention leave and canceled his privilege of going home to his wife at night.

"A hug, a kiss, it was worth it to make her smile and to see her smile again," Jinggoy said of his visit to his Lola Mary, the mother of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

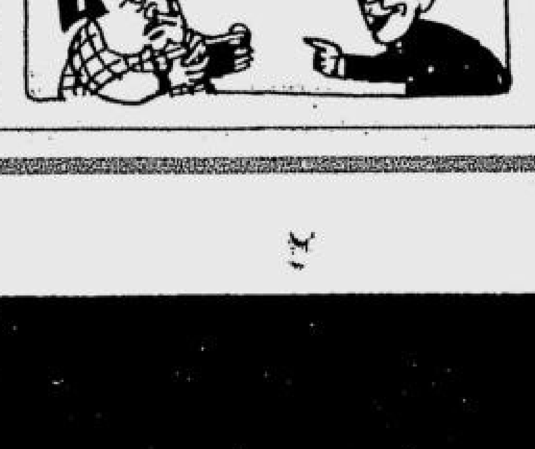
The anti-graft court ordered prison guards to escort him back to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) by 5 p.m. each day, effective immediately, to rejoin his detained father in their hospital suite.

Jinggoy told reporters he would abide by the ruling.

He won the five-day furlough on Monday to clear his desk at the municipal hall, but in addition to completing his civic duties, he also made unauthorized visits to see his grandmother and lay a wreath at a monument to national hero Jose Rizal.

The Sandiganbayan said patriotism and filial respect were "laudable indeed," but added that the visits "constituted flagrant violations of the strict and explicit conditions imposed by the court."

JINGGOY/ A18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Lawyer wants PlayStation for Erap

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

A SONY PlayStation for ousted President Joseph Estrada sounds farfetched.

But that's what lawyer Raymond Fortun is requesting authorities to give Estrada so that they could talk about things other than the graft and plunder case filed against his client.

Fortun told GMA-7 yesterday that he had specifically suggested that Estrada be provided with the video games "NBA Live 2001" and "Knockout King."

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center Tuesday night, close to two months after his arrest, Estrada claimed to be "depressed" while in detention.

The INQUIRER caught him watching a political affairs program on cable TV. Later

LAWYER/ A20

ISULONG ANG KAPAYAPAAN!

Gov't, MILF start Tripoli peace talks

GUINGONA

MURAD

TRIPOLI, Libya—Peace talks aimed at ending 30 years of separatist violence in the Philippines started Wednesday, with Muslim separatists and Philippine government officials saying the three-day summit offered a historic chance for peace.

"The road to peace and development has not been easy, (but) we have learned the lessons: To end the fighting and to forge a... lasting peace with honor," Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona said at the opening of the talks.

Al Haj Murad, the vice chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said "a peace deal that has long eluded us is now within our reach."

Murad said the group, one of the larger and more moderate Islamic separatist groups in the Philippines was willing to delay autonomy talks to end the hostilities. The group has long pushed for limited autonomy in the Philippines' resource-rich southern islands.

The 30-year conflict has devastated the islands region and killed some 120,000 people.

The Tripoli talks are being hosted by the Gadhafi International Foundation for Charitable Associations, headed by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's son, Seif el-Islam.

"Our aim is to reach a comprehensive and just solution for the conflict that has gone on for too long in southern Philippines," the younger Gadhafi said.

But more than "good will gestures" were needed to restore peace, he said. Joint-action was needed to restore trust between both parties and reintegrate the Muslim minorities into Filipino society.

Minority

Muslims represent about 5 percent of the Philippines' 78 million population, who are predominantly Roman Catholics. The Muslim minority—known as Moros—lives mainly in the southern Mindanao islands and Sulu archipelago.

Absent from Wednesday's meeting was Moammar Gadhafi who helped engineer original peace talks in the 1970s between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front, another large separatist group, leading to a final peace deal in 1996.

MILF representatives said they were losing patience with the Philippine government, questioning its stated commitment to granting Muslims limited autonomy and developing the southern islands.

President Macapagal-Arroyo wants peace talks with the 20,000-strong separatist group and increased funding for Mindanao as top priorities.

But the Philippine army recently accused the MILF of helping another Islamic group, the Abu Sayyaf, which has conducted numerous kidnappings, the last being on May 27 when at least 20 people were taken from an island resort and held for ransom.

Three Americans were among the captives. The group claimed last week it killed one of the Americans, Guillermo Sobero, 40, of Corona, California.

Atrocities

No body has been found, but government officials said Monday that Sobero had probably been killed.

Murad said, "We have no involvement with... all these atrocities."

The government has declared war on the Abu Sayyaf group, which it refers to as bandits.

Libya provided funds and arms to Islamic separatists in the 1970s during early struggles with the government. It also helped mediate the release of hostages taken by the Abu Sayyaf last year, reportedly paying millions of dollars for their release.

Seif el-Islam Gadhafi told The Associated Press that The Gadhafi Foundation wants to "support Muslims all over the world, especially those who are persecuted and face unfair treatment and injustice."

Libya would assist the peace talks with "advice," offer projects for Filipinos and the government and continue to finance the development in Mindanao. *AP*

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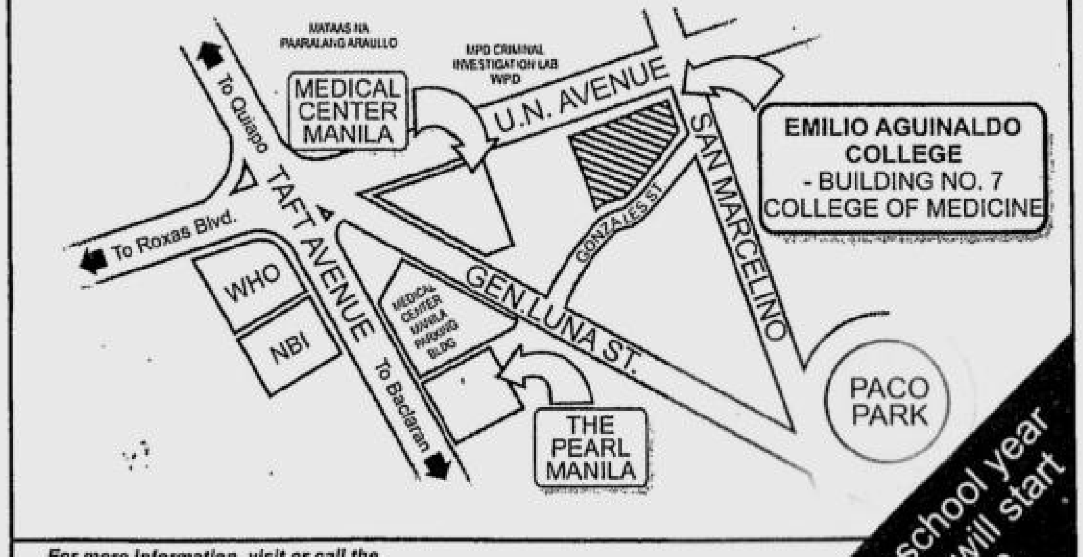
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RP IN CRISIS

Despair, cynicism drag economy down

A SENSE of cynicism and despair is creeping over the Philippines as the economy sours and the government wrestles with a never-ending hostage crisis in the south.

Abu Sayyaf gunmen gatecrashed the party as President Macapagal-Arroyo and most of her 76 million countrymen celebrated the peaceful downfall of her corruption-plagued predecessor Joseph Estrada.

Nearly four weeks after the Muslim rebels snatched 20 Americans and Filipinos from a western resort, tourists have become scarce, investment plans are frozen, the local currency is near record lows and the government faces a credit downgrade.

Other kidnap gangs are exploiting the crisis by targeting wealthy businessmen in Manila. Among recent victims are at least two Singapore nationals who are understood to have paid huge ransoms.

"Psychology really affects the fundamentals of the economy," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said on Radio Mindanao Network.

"You can't really change that until you solve our law and order problems."

After the military boasted for days that the gunmen, who number less than 500, were surrounded in Basilan, they conceded Thursday that a rescue was not imminent. They denied troops were being pulled back to allow ransom talks.

Some 5,000 troops have cordoned off a 30 sq.-km. area, "but this is jungle," said Armed Forces spokesman Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

"We're not offering any excuses, but that is really the nature of the war there," said Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

"We should not allow mere bandits to paralyze us," Ms Macapagal said. But crime is just one of her problems.

Exports are plunging, government finances are deteriorating, and peace talks with communist guerrillas are on hold after a wave of killings by the rebels.

The rising budget deficit prompted the US rating firm Standard and Poor's to warn Manila on Wednesday that it risked a credit downgrade—a move that would raise the Philippines cost of borrowing.

After posting four percent GDP growth last year, Manila is aiming for a 3.3-3.8 percent target. Less growth means up to P4 billion in lost revenue, officials say.

The peso, which slid nearly four percent in a matter of weeks to 52.35 midweek, and kidnappings are the people's favorite topics,

"In the short term this may also cause political instability," University of the Philippines sociologist Walden Bello said.

Filipinos were outraged when the police issued statistics this week showing that crime rates were actually down 10 percent in the five months to May.

"Never in my lifetime has peace and order been so bad, and the (police) can have their cloudcuckooland statistics for breakfast," wrote former Estrada press secretary Fernando Barican in the INQUIRER.

He said one of his employees was "robbed and almost killed last week," and "he didn't waste his time by reporting it." *AFP*

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9 new gov't advisers named in Oslo talks

BY J. JAVELLANA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appointed nine new advisers to the government panel in the peace talks with communist rebels, which has been put on hold because of the killing of Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinaldo by the New People's Army.

The President expanded the government panel after it declared a recess from talks in Oslo, Norway, to protest Aguinaldo's killing.

Silvestre Bello III, chief government negotiator, has thereafter announced that the talks would resume in the middle of August in the same venue.

Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Waldo Q. Flores said the President expanded the government panel as "another sign of good faith."

Named advisers are Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, Rep. Rolando Andaya, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, Presidential Assistant for Eastern Mindanao Jesus Dureza, Col. Carlos Holganza, Navy Commander Roy Antonio, Chief Supt. Hercules Cataluna, Press Undersecretary Cerge Remonde and Tarlac Gov. Jose Yap.

"(The appointments were made) so that more people could be involved in this peace process. So that more inputs could be provided by these very experienced people," Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Eduardo Ermita, presidential adviser on the peace process, recommended the new peace panel advisers.

Biazon and Andaya were tasked with giving advice to the panel on legislative reforms while Perez would give advice on legal matters and the release of political offenders.

Dureza was made adviser on tactical alliance between the National Democratic Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Holganza and Antonio on military concerns and intelligence; Cataluna on police and intelligence matters; Remonde as coordinator for media.

Yap served as personal emissary of then President Fidel Ramos to the NDF when talks were undertaken in 1992.

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Ilocanos get tobacco taxes through Chavit

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN CITY—Outgoing Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson yesterday tried to downplay his perceived influence in the current administration but President Macapagal-Arroyo herself confirmed that he was "thick" (*malakas*) with her.

"*Akala n'yo siguro napakalakas ko sa* Macapagal administration. *Hindi, napakahirap po* (You probably think I am thick with the Macapagal administration. No, it's so hard)," Singson told the crowd of well-wishers that gathered at Baluarte, his plush home here, to greet him on his 60th birthday.

"*Ganoon din ang akala ninyo noong panahon ni dating Pangulong* Estrada, *pero noon ay nagbabayad ako* (That is what you thought during the term of former President Estrada, but at that time I was paying for it)," said Singson, alluding to tobacco tax payoffs he allegedly made to Estrada.

President Macapagal, in her reply, corrected Singson.

"*Hindi totoo yan. Napakalakas ni* Chavit *sa akin* (That is not true. Chavit is thick with me)," she said.

The President came to this city on Singson's invitation to administer the oath of office to the incoming officials of Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, La Union and Abra. The oath-taking was set to coincide with Singson's birthday.

Aside from the kind words, Ms Macapagal also gave Singson fresh funds for the province from its share of tobacco excise taxes, the same taxes Estrada and several others have been charged with diverting to their own use.

Singson testified about the diversion of funds before the Senate blue ribbon committee and again at Estrada's impeachment trial. The collapse of the Senate impeachment trial eventually led to Estrada's ouster from office.

Recently, Singson was identified as a go-between in government efforts to get Moro rebel leaders in Mindanao, like Commander Robot, to surrender.

PRESIDENT Macapagal with birthday boy Chavit Singson and other well-wishers led by Ilocos Norte leaders Bongbong Marcos and Roque Ablan.
JOAN BONDOC

He had also attempted to downplay this role in recent interviews.

As President Macapagal announced the release of more than P107 million as Ilocos Sur's share of new tobacco excise taxes, she said she was releasing the money "without any commissions."

"*Buung-buo, walang bawas ang pondo* (It's intact, nothing was taken from the funds)," she said, in obvious reference to the charges against Estrada. The crowd lapped it up.

One group, however, appeared unimpressed by Singson.

Despite Ms Macapagal's warm words for him, members of the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance (Sisa) asked her to look into Singson's allegedly anomalous activities.

"Madam, we are not asking you to be ungrateful to our governor. We know you owe him a debt of gratitude. But we believe that on the weighing scale of values, justice prevails over gratitude," the group said in a statement.

"The same cry that you heard at Edsa is being (voiced) in this corner of our nation. End corruption now, justice for the people. Those who stole from the people should be made to answer for their wrongdoings. No one should be above the law whether he is the President or a governor pretending to be a hero," the group's statement said.

"A hero is one who accepts his mistakes and makes amends, not one who steals from his people and points fingers at others who stole more," the group said.

Apart from Ilocos Sur officials, those sworn into office were Abra Governor-elect Vicente Valera and his wife, Ma. Zita, mayor-elect of Bangued town; outgoing La Union Gov. Justo Orros and Governor-elect Victor Ortega; Ilocos Norte Representative-elect Roque Ablan Jr., and Cagayan Representative-elect Manuel Mamba.

Aside from the tobacco taxes, the President also awarded checks for livelihood and infrastructure projects in the province and region.

Roco calls for live telecast of Erap trial

By Blanche S. Rivera

EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco yesterday batted for the live telecast of the trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada for the edification of Filipinos on the brilliance—or lack of it—of the country's supposedly top lawyers that would represent the government and the Estrada camp.

Roco, a firm believer in the "sunshine principle" of transparency, said the Estradas should not be afraid of media coverage of the historic trial because it would merely show the caliber of the lawyers in court and the character of the people involved in the case.

"If the client is bright, the defense would be bright. If the client is stupid then even if the lawyers want to give a good defense, how can they do that?" Roco said during a press briefing yesterday.

The Estrada camp has asked the Supreme Court to ban the media from covering the trial of the former president, his son Jinggoy, at the Sandiganbayan because it believes that the media were biased against the Estrada family.

But the chief of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports said the Constitution "required" that a trial should be public to ensure that the proceedings would be fair to both the accuser and the accused.

ROCO

Roco said the accusation of the Estrada camp that the media and court would be a mere venue for the lawyers' grandstanding was "valid" but that it was a trait that came with public trials.

"That is exactly what a public trial is all about," he said. "If the lawyer is good, then he is good. If he is stupid, then it is no longer the fault of the judge or the Constitution, it is the fault of the lawyer."

"If the client is rushing to jail, let him do so, as long as he pays the attorney's fees," the DECS chief remarked, half-joking.

Estrada is represented by a pool of the country's biggest—and most expensive lawyers, including former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, former Sen. Rene Saguisag, Estelito Mendoza, Jose Flaminiano and the Fortun brothers.

Roco said the vital policy issue now that the Macapagal administration and the Estrada camp had been arguing about was what constituted a public trial considering the rights of the press to report the goings-on in the government and courts.

He said a traditional public trial meant that it was held in court, which is "theoretically," open to all. Making the trial public by means of a mass communication tool such as the television or radio would not violate the principle of being public.

He said giving people access to court proceedings was the "only protection" that the hearings would not be turned into a kangaroo court.

"The Constitution requires public trial, and in today's situation, I believe public trial includes television," said Roco, who was among the top lawyers before he joined government service.

"What is the difference between 100 people watching in court and 100,000 watching on TV?" he added.

Estrada is charged with multiple counts of plunder, betrayal of public trust, and graft and corruption for allegedly amassing some P4 billion using his office when he was still president.

Fake 'father' foiled in bid to bring Pinoy toddler to US

By Rocky Nazareno

UNITED States immigration authorities have foiled an attempt to smuggle into the country a one-and-a-half-year old Filipino girl, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Little Tanya Lopez was traveling with her supposed father, a certain John, a US citizen, when they were stopped by immigration agents at the John F. Kennedy Airport in New York.

John is reportedly an American studying medicine at Fatima College in the Philippines.

According to DFA legal officer Raul Dado, the fake father and daughter tandem arrived in New York on May 2 and were about to clear immigration when an alert agent noted that John was carrying a return ticket to Manila for the very next day.

"Their papers appeared to be all in order except for the return ticket of John which aroused their suspicion," Dado said.

He said US immigration has been on alert for a syndicate that smuggled babies into the country.

Dado said the sale of foreign babies to Americans was a lucrative business with each baby fetching at least $10,000, or P520,000 at today's exchange rate.

John was detained by airport authorities but was later released on bail pending the filing of charges against him.

Tanya was repatriated to Manila on June 16 and is now in the care of a government-funded institution for abandoned babies.

In a bizarre twist, Tanya made her return plane trip to Manila in the seat beside Social Welfare and Development Secretary Dinky Soliman.

Soliman has since created a task force on human smuggling, which she chairs, as a result of Tanya's case.

"What made us believe that a syndicate was behind this was when a woman came to the center to claim Tanya even before the baby had arrived from the US," Dado said.

He said it was peculiar that the unidentified woman would know of Tanya's impending arrival at the institution when "nobody else was supposed to know she was coming back."

Dado said the woman hastily left when a social worker asked for identification.

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Gordon eyes ₱750-M budget for RP tourism

BY NORMAN BORDADORA

TOURISM Secretary Richard Gordon is optimistic his department will get the P750 million he has been asking for to intensify the promotion of Philippine tourism, in the wake of the latest hostage crisis to hit Mindanao.

At a press conference at the ill-fated Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan, Gordon said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin told him last week that the Department of Tourism might be the only government agency to get a budget increase this fiscal year.

"Tourists will come if we focus on tourism promotion. We have many excellent attractions that are unknown, undiscovered and little promoted," Gordon said, as he led foreign correspondents in a look-see at the Palawan resort, where the Abu Sayyaf bandit group recently snatched 20 foreign and local tourists.

Two of the hostages were later killed while about half were released or were able to escape. One man, American Guillermo Sobero, was believed killed by the bandits although this has not been confirmed.

To counter the negative publicity, Gordon said the DOT will aggressively promote the country in Europe, Japan, South Korea and China. There will also be an effort, although smaller in scope and intensity, in Singapore, he said.

"There is a need to improve and promote long haul markets like Germany and Great Britain. The Germans and British have 16-day vacation privileges, 10 days of which they spend in Thailand," Gordon said.

"Imagine, they are going to countries where English isn't even spoken," he said.

Gordon said the DOT will also tap the assistance of Filipinos in the United States.

"We are looking into the possibility of luring balikbayans with their American spouses and friends," Gordon said. "They can spend the long Christmas season here."

The tourism chief said there was no reason the country should fear the Abu .Sayyaf and allow the terrorists to influence business and tourism decisions.

"We are not going to base our policies on fear. I arrived here with no security.men in tow. I am sleeping here tonight alone," Gordon said at the Dos Palmas resort.

The DOT's regional directors' quarterly meeting was also held at the Dos Palmas Resort.

Gordon said, "We are preparing a long and exciting Christmas holiday in the Philippines for balikbayans, OFWs and their foreign relatives and friends."

"Balik-probinsya (province) events and festivities will dot our calendars starting August," he said.

CORDIAL RIVALS

Behind the exchange of cordial smiles between Batanes Rep. Butch Abad of the Liberal Party and comebacking Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia of Lakas-NUCD is the raging battle for the position of Speaker of the House. The two met Tuesday at the Bulung-Pulungan at the Westin Philippine Plaza, a weekly forum with the members of the media. They answered questions and shared their respective legislative agenda for the 12th Congress.

Cebu resort gets big scare

BY JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Four armed men on board a motorized banca reportedly tried to enter a posh beach resort in San Fernando town, 29 kilometers south of this city, on June 15.

The suspects were forced to leave, however, after they were spotted by a security guard of the Pulchra Beach Resort, according to a report by Supt. Edgardo Inking, maritime police director for Central Visayas, to maritime group director Chief Supt. Avelino Razon, Philippine National Police director for Central Visayas.

Ingking said he had granted the request of Pulchra management for two maritime policemen to guard the resort at night beginning on June 16.

Razon and Senior Supt. Antonio Salvacion, Cebu police director, however, downplayed the report.

Razon said he learned from the officials and security guards of Pulchra that the armed men might have been just fishermen from the area.

Salvacion, for his part, said that what the security guard saw that night was a group of policemen on patrol.

Supt. Pacivensidro Cataylo, maritime police deputy chief in Central Visayas, however, stood by the report.

He said his unit wrote an "honest-to-goodness" report based on the accounts of witnesses they had talked to.

In the report, Ingking said his office received at least three calls from Christine Flores, Pulchra duty manager, at about 11 p.m. on June 15 about a group of armed men who had tried to enter the resort.

Elements of the 701st Maritime Police Station led by Senior Insp. Ranulfo Sebusa were dispatched to Pulchra in Barangay San Isidrio, San Fernando, at around 1 a.m. of June 16.

The report said Eduardo Gentapa, a Pulchra security guard, told Sebusa that earlier, at about 4 p.m., he saw four persons on a motorized pumpboat some 10 meters from the shoreline of the resort.

Two hours later, he again noticed the four men who were wearing black bonnets. Two of them went ashore carrying Armalite rifles, he said.

"When he (Gentapa) focused his flashlight on the armed men, the two hurriedly left and escaped toward the mangrove area nearby," the report said.

When Sebusa's team conducted a patrol, they spotted an unlighted motorized banca with four persons aboard cruising in the vicinity of San Fernando and Naga towns.

The report said the team could not approach the speeding banca because of the low draft.

Sebusa said the description of the four men seen at Pulchra gibed with the description of the suspects in a bank robbery in Talibon town, Bohol.

Some P4.7 million was taken in that heist when six men, pretending to be nursing students, robbed the Land Bank of the Philippines branch in Talibon at about 1 p.m. on May 29.

The maritime police report said the same persons were also seen on June 14 in the vicinity of the Nalusuan Island Beach Resort, another posh resort in Cordova town on Mactan Island, Cebu.

But Razon said Pulchra management denied the report about the armed men when he visited the resort on Wednesday.

"The report was denied by Pulchra Human Resources Division chief and chief security officer Gerald Raboy, who said the armed men were really fishermen who had entered the marked off area defining the resort's boundaries in the water," Razon said in his report to PNP chief Gen. Leandro Mendoza.

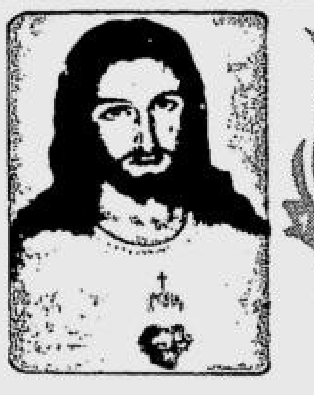
Razon, however, said he has ordered a more thorough investigation of the incident "to determine the facts."

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Razon denied he was trying to cover up the incident.

Protection for local artists

THE Bureau of Immigration has signed an agreement with two associations of local musicians for the screening and accreditation of foreign artists before they are allowed to perform in the country.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said the agreement aims to protect the interest of Filipino artists who are often "robbed of their livelihood opportunities" by foreign musicians in the country.



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Education exec, teacher suspended for 90 days

THE DEPARTMENT of Education, Culture and Sports has ordered the suspension of a controversial division superintendent and a ranking public school teacher for allegedly selling teaching positions in Olongapo City.

The DECS also formally charged with grave misconduct, commission of acts punishable under the Anti-Graft Law and gross neglect of duty teacher Rebecca Laranang and Olongapo schools division superintendent Perlita Basa.

In the DECS' formal complaint, Education Undersecretary Ramon Bacani placed Laranang and Basa under preventive suspension for 90 days pending the investigation of the administrative charges against them.

Citing a provision in the Administrative Code of 1987, Bacani said the DECS as the "proper disciplining authority" could suspend the two DECS employees "if the charge involves grave misconduct, or if there are reasons to believe that respondents are guilty of the charge which would warrant removal from service."

Laranang, ironically, had been among those who accused Basa of selling teaching positions and facilitating transfer of assignments for a fee of not less than P5,000 and some valuables such as a mobile phone.

Along with 11 teachers from Olongapo City, Laranang complained to the DECS that Basa had been receiving money for teacher items in the province, adding Basa would not approve the appointments unless she was paid.

"This is not a penalty yet," said DECS legal consultant Percival Flores. "We are suspending them so they would not be in a position to influence the investigation."

Flores said the suspensions, which were handed down last month, would not take effect yet in the case of Laranang because she was still serving a suspension by the Office of the Ombudsman on a different case. It could be effective starting next month, he said.

Basa, on the other hand, was temporarily relieved from service. She had faced several charges during the administration of former Education Secretary Andrew Gonzalez but these were dismissed allegedly because of her close ties with the former officials.

Education Secretary Raul Roco presided over a public hearing on the case of Laranang and Basa last February, where the two hurled charges against each other, prompting education officials to suspect a mere fall-out in what could be a partnership in the irregular practices.

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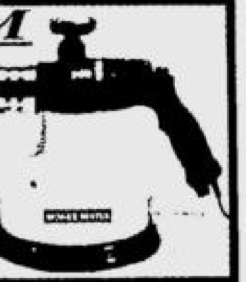

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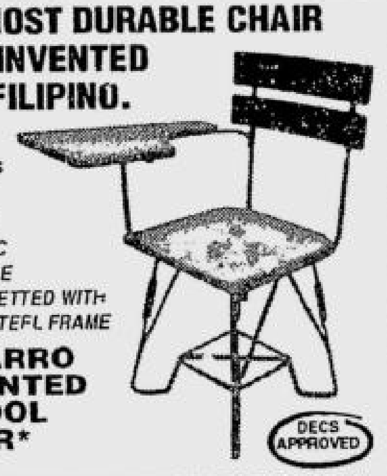

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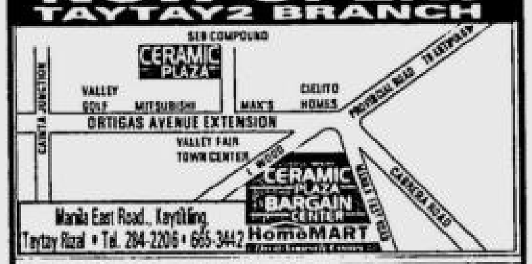

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Loren wants say in Senate fight

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

SOME SENATORS who are not aspiring to the Senate presidency apparently want to have a big say in who should get the post.

Sen. Loren Legarda said yesterday that senators who are not contenders for the post but are aligned with the People Power Coalition will meet next week to "assess the situation."

"There are so many candidates so we said, 'let not the contenders dictate to us, we should band together,'" Legarda told reporters.

She said the meeting was meant to "assess the situation and to find out if we aspire to the same (committee) chairmanships so that we could settle the matter among ourselves."

"We won't talk to the contenders, let them talk to themselves. Us non-contenders will be the ones talking with each other," Legarda said.

She said the PPC non-aspirants are the new "triumvirate bloc" of Legarda and Senators Juan Flavier and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., neophyte Senators Manuel Villar, Ralph Recto and Francis Pangilinan and Sen. Sergio Osmeña III.

Legarda said she, Flavier and Magsaysay have formed the triumvirate to "make decisions as a bloc."

"That's our bloc, one for all and all for one," she said.

She said she, Osmeña, Flavier and Pangilinan had been discussing the situation at the Senate, particularly the claims by their colleagues aspiring for the top post that they had the numbers to win, when they decided to meet next week.

Flavier confirmed the meeting on Tuesday but said it will be informal where "anything under the sun could be discussed," including the Senate presidency.

Flavier stressed, however, that no blocs have been formed or discussed.

"Just wait for the outcome of the meeting," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Senators Renato Cayetano and Franklin Drilon, who are aligned with the PPC, have expressed interest in the Senate presidency, while in the opposition Senator-elect Edgardo Angara and current Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is an independent, might be the candidate.

Other neophyte senators have been pushing new Senator-elect Joker Arroyo for the post as well.

In a telephone interview, Pimentel, who is abroad, said he welcomed the move of the non-contenders to the post, saying it was a "good stand."

"It's a good stand because it's important that the Senate appears to be an independent body which could be relied upon," Pimentel said.

He also expressed confidence that the senators would eventually elect someone who would not kowtow to any group, whether political or social.

Asked if any PPC senators were supporting his bid to retain the presidency, Pimentel said three or four were, but he did not want to name them.

His "whole assessment" was that "nobody else has the numbers" to win the post.

A senator needs 13 votes of the 24-member Senate to clinch its presidency.

Comelec to probe Recto vote-padding

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

THE COMMISSION on Elections has started looking into the complaint of the Puwersa ng Masa that the national tally for senators still included 30,000 padded votes for Sen. Ralph Recto in Zamboanga del Norte which the National Board of Canvassers (NBOC) had already ordered deducted as of June 4.

But even the Comelec officials who were members of the (NBOC) seem to be clueless on the correct figures for Zamboanga del Norte in the national canvass that became the basis for the proclamation of the 13 senators on June 5.

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo, who also heads the NBOC, said he has ordered a verification of the allegations of PnM lawyer Rufus Rodriguez that the 30,000 votes were not deducted despite an order by the NBOC in Resolution 01-003.

"That is being looked into, we have to find out," Benipayo said in a news conference yesterday.

Rodriguez, in a petition with the NBOC, sought the correction of Recto's national total as of June 4, because Recto's total for Zamboanga del Norte in the canvass was still 117,027 instead of the corrected 87,027.

Rodriguez protested that while the 61,000 padded votes for Recto were deducted in Tawi-Tawi as ordered in Resolution 01-003, the 30,000 padded votes in Zamboanga del Norte were not corrected and were carried over in the national tally.

Comelec commissioner Ressureccion Borra said he had issued a memorandum asking the Comelec clerk of court to provide him with the transcripts of the national canvassing at the Philippine International Convention Center particularly the executive session when the correction of votes for Zamboanga del Norte was supposed to have been made.

"This is to determine the actual figures," Borra said. "This has to be verified to be fair to everybody."

But Benipayo yesterday said "it would seem" that Recto was in 12th place based on the national total as of Wednesday when the certificates of canvass for Lanao del Sur was canvassed by the NBOC.

The board also canvassed on Wednesday some municipal COCs from Kalinga, Masbate, Lanao del Norte, Eastern Samar and Maguindanao where special elections were held.

"The results are still being audited and yet to be officially confirmed but No. 12 will still be Recto," Benipayo said. "It would seem that way."

Benipayo said Recto was leading Honasan by some 44,000 votes but did not give the actual figures.

Benipayo said even if the 30,000 votes which Rodriguez had discovered to have been padded into the national tally via Zamboanga del Norte were deducted, Recto would still be leading Honasan.

"It would seem to have no effect on the ranking," Benipayo said. "But nothing is definite yet."

Benipayo said the NBOC must resolve first Rodriguez's petitions, including the one seeking to deduct 30,000 the votes in Zamboanga del Norte, before it could come up with the final tally and ranking for the 13 senators.

Another petition questioned Recto's 114,000 votes in Maguindanao and Lanao del Norte. Rodriguez also contested the canvassing in 10 towns in Lanao del Sur because Recto's votes were allegedly padded in the COCs.

Commissioners Luz Tancangco and Rufino Javier had already sought for the official canvass reports on the senatorial elections and the breakdown for Zamboanga del Norte to see if the 30,000 padded had indeed been part of the June 4 tally.

Recto and Honasan are locked in a tight battle for the 12th position which carries with it a six-year term. The eventual 13th placer shall serve for only three years to complete the unexpired term of former Sen. Teofisto Guingona, now Vice President.

Mad cow scare over, but ban on beef imports stays

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA

THE MAD cow scare is over.

The declaration was made yesterday by Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor who said that consumers are back to eating beef and beef products.

"The problem is over although the price of beef now is higher," Montemayor told reporters during the inauguration of the Department of Agriculture's National Dairy Authority building in Diliman, Quezon city.

He attributed the increase in the prices of beef to the limitation in the importation of beef, which mostly come from Australia and local suppliers and meat processors.

Montemayor stressed that no case of livestock infected with the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) has been reported in the Philippines since the disease first broke out in Great Britain.

However, the ban on the importation of beef and other beef products from Europe stays because the disease has not been contained there.

Montemayor said the ban will be lifted once the World Organization for Animal Health declares that the disease has been contained in Europe.

The DA has banned the entry of livestock from known "mad cow disease" countries, such as United Kingdom, France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Luxembourg, Liechenstein and Germany.

BSE has caused a harrowing fatal disease for people in Europe. Reports said the number of people dead and thought to be dying since 1986 stands at over 80, most of them young. No case has yet been reported in Asia.

There is no known cure for BSE, according to the World Health Organization.

To humans, the disease is called the variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. It is a fatal degenerative disease characterized by a long incubation period of 15 months to 30 years, insidious onset of illness with psychiatric symptoms and agonizing death.

The disease was first discovered in 1986 in the United Kingdom after several cows turned "mad." They were fed with innards from sheep believed infected with BSE.

Also yesterday, Montemayor said the department would ask local milk manufacturers to buy a portion of their raw material requirements from local dairy cooperatives to help dairy farmers find markets for their fresh milk.

He said a provision of the National Dairy Act (NDA) of 1995 or Republic Act 7884 which provides for such an arrangement has not been implemented until now,

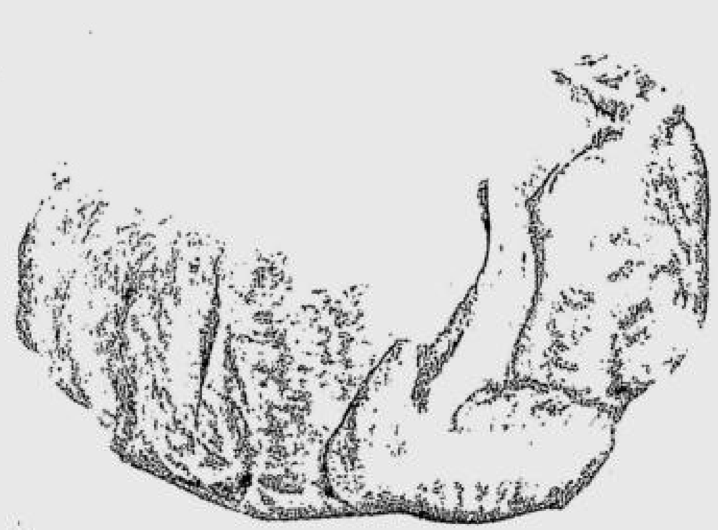
New college opens

KALAYAAN College, a new university at Riverbanks Center in Marikina run by UP faculty members and retired UP alumni has just opened its campus for enrollment this school year.

The founders of KC are led by former UP President Dr. Jose V. Abueva (1987-1993), Chancellor of UP Diliman (1990-1991) and UP professor emeritus in political science and public administration.

Other KC founders and incorporators are UP educators and alumni known for their scholarly, professional and community service: Thelma B. Kintanar, Gonzalo M. Jurado, Virginia S. Carino, Emeteria P. Lee, National Artist Napoleon V. Abueva, ceramics artist Lanelle Abueva Fernando, and performing artist Monique Wilson.

KC, in a press statement, said it seeks to meet the growing need for quality higher education as its curricula is modeled after that of the University of the Philippines. KC welcomes UPCAT takers who due to limited capacity and quotas of various colleges in UP Diliman, UP Manila and UP Los Baños could not be admitted.



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Mayon spews lava; alert may be raised

LAVA flowed 1.5 km down the side of Mayon Volcano yesterday, and scientists met to decide if it was about to erupt.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology was discussing whether to raise its public alert about a possible eruption from the current level of three on a five-point scale.

Level three means an eruption could occur within weeks. Level four indicates that an eruption is expected within days, and level five means a hazardous eruption is in progress.

Although no explosions have been recorded on the Mayon Volcano since it became active in January, a sudden outburst of gas-filled lava could still be coming, the institute said.

"The occurrence of lava flows signifies the continuous acceleration of the overall activity of the volcano," the institute said in a bulletin to the media.

Seismographs recorded 265 tremors during a 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m. yesterday, up from an average 203 last week.

There also was a sharp rise of sulfur dioxide gas emissions, from 1,700 tons daily last week to 9,448 tons on yesterday. A high sulfur gas reading indicates increasing volcanic activity and rising magma.

Ed Laguerta, a resident volcanologist in Legazpi City near Mayon, said a slow-moving river of lava, including red-hot rocks and boulders, was flowing through a gully on the southeastern slope of the volcano yesterday morning.

He said clouds hanging over the volcano were reflecting the bright glow of rising lava inside it.

"We are now on the alert," Laguerta said. "We have told the villages fronting the channels to be on the alert. The disaster officials and the military's Task Force Mayon are on standby."

The 2,474-meter volcano's current activity began in January when it puffed gas and ash, a repeat of the conditions before it last erupted in February 2000. During that eruption officials evacuated about 68,000 residents from the area.

Mayon, a cone-shaped mountain towering above farming communities in the Bicol region, is a tourist attraction in the Philippines. Its most violent eruption occurred in 1814, killing more than 1,200 people and burying an entire town in volcanic mud. *AP*

'Emong' weakens, heads for Cagayan

By Cynthia D. Balana

TROPICAL storm "Emong," packing center winds of 95 km per hour and gustiness of up to 120 kph, has slowed down and charged its direction toward Cagayan-Isabela area, weather forecasters said yesterday.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, satellite pictures showed the center of the storm at 400 km east northeast of Daet, Camarines Norte; or at 590 km east southeast of Tuguegarao, Cagayan.

Emong (international code name: Cheby) is forecast to be at 200 east southeast of Tuguegarao this afternoon.

Public Storm Signal No. 2 is in effect over Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino, Aurora, Quezon, including Polillo Island, Camarines provinces, Catanduanes and Albay. These areas will have stormy weather today.

Coastal waters will become rough to very rough and dangerous to all seacrafts.

Storm Signal No. 1 is in effect over the rest of Northern Luzon, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Laguna, Rizal, Marinduque, Sorsogon, Burias Island and Samar.

Residents in threatened areas have been advised to take precautionary measures against possible floodings and landslides.

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3RD OR 4TH TERM?

Bataan gov faces disqualification suit

A PETITION to disqualify Gov. Leonardo B. Roman of Bataan from another term in office, even if he won unopposed in the May 14 elections, has been elevated to the Supreme Court.

The disqualification case against Roman was based on the issue of whether a partially served term is considered a full term and counted against the term limits of an official.

Roman first became Bataan governor after he won a recall election in 1993 and served out the remaining term of Gov. Enrique Garcia from June 28, 1994 to June 30, 1995.

In 1995 and again in 1998, he won reelection. In last May's elections, he ran again, unopposed, and has since been proclaimed by the Commission on Elections.

The issue before the Supreme Court is whether Roman's 1994-95 term is considered his first term. If it is, then Roman could not have run again in this year's elections.

Roger P. Galang, a registered voter in Bataan, filed a motion with the Comelec on May 21 to annul Roman's proclamation, which was held before the canvassing of votes could be completed, even if he was the only candidate.

On May 15, Garcia, who became a congressman for Bataan, filed a motion to suspend Roman's proclamation, citing irregularities in canvass results.

Both Galang's and Garcia's motions were also premised on the disqualification of Roman for having already served three terms before the last elections.

On June 15, the petition seeking to disqualify Roman from office was elevated to the Supreme Court.

SC tells Sandigan to try old graft case

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

THE SUPREME Court yesterday allowed the Sandiganbayan to proceed with a 12-year-old graft case against businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, after it ruled that the graft court was able to establish probable cause.

The nine-page order stemmed from Cojuangco's petition asking the high tribunal to dismiss additional information tacked onto the case by the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The additional information was supposed to prove Cojuangco was a dummy for the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the acquisition of controlling interest in the Bulletin Publishing Corp.

The Supreme Court had initially issued a temporary restraining order against the Sandiganbayan following the petition of Cojuangco.

On Nov. 27, 1989, Cojuangco was charged with graft for allegedly acting as Marcos' dummy "in the acquisition of shares of stock in the Bulletin Publishing Corp. and Liwayway Publishing Inc., thereby inducing or causing Marcos to directly or indirectly participate in (their) management and control or have pecuniary or financial interests in the said corporations."

Cojuangco filed an opposition to his arrest the following day, saying no preliminary investigation had been conducted, although he made an offer to deposit a sum of money corresponding to the bail required.

He deposited P100,000 with the Sandiganbayan that same day.

On Nov. 29, 1989, the PCGG filed an ex-parte motion before the Sandiganbayan for the issuance of an arrest warrant "on the basis of evidence on record."

Two months later, however, the Sandiganbayan issued a resolution denying the motion.

Undaunted, the PCGG conducted a reinvestigation and submitted documentary evidence, including nine Philtrust Bank checks totaling more than P35 million issued by the Bulletin Publishing Corp. to Cojuangco, Cesar Zalamea and Jose Y. Campos.

PCGG prosecutors Nelson Salva and Reynaldo Ros said the checks were significant to the case as they were deposited in Marcos' account at the Security Bank and Trust Co. which was known only by its number 299.

The prosecutors said 299 corresponded to the initials of the Marcos children—BII meaning Bongbong, Imee and Irene.

They said they were able to verify that the 299 account was "one of the 77 accounts at Security Bank and Trust Co. that belonged" to Marcos.

The lawyers' discovery was made part of the additional information against Cojuangco.

They charged that Cojuangco, et al. by acting as dummies, caused Marcos to "maintain beneficial ownership of the controlling interest in, and to directly and indirectly participate in the management and control of" Bulletin Publishing Corp. despite constitutional and legal prohibitions.

The PCGG's additional information was filed on May 25, 1990 and was admitted by the Sandiganbayan on June 8, two weeks later.

The SC, in its order yesterday, noted that given the two-week period between the filing of the additional information and its admittance, "there certainly was enough time for the Sandiganbayan to thoroughly study the records at its disposal and determine probable cause for the issuance of such a warrant."

The tribunal also noted that the Sandiganbayan, in accepting the additional information, was guided by an SC circular allowing "mere reliance on the prosecutor's certification as to the existence of probable cause."

The SC also established that the Sandiganbayan had studied the PCGG report on the checks endorsed for deposit to the account of Marcos.

Hence, the SC ordered the Sandiganbayan to proceed with the case against Cojuangco, more than 10 years after preventing it from doing so.

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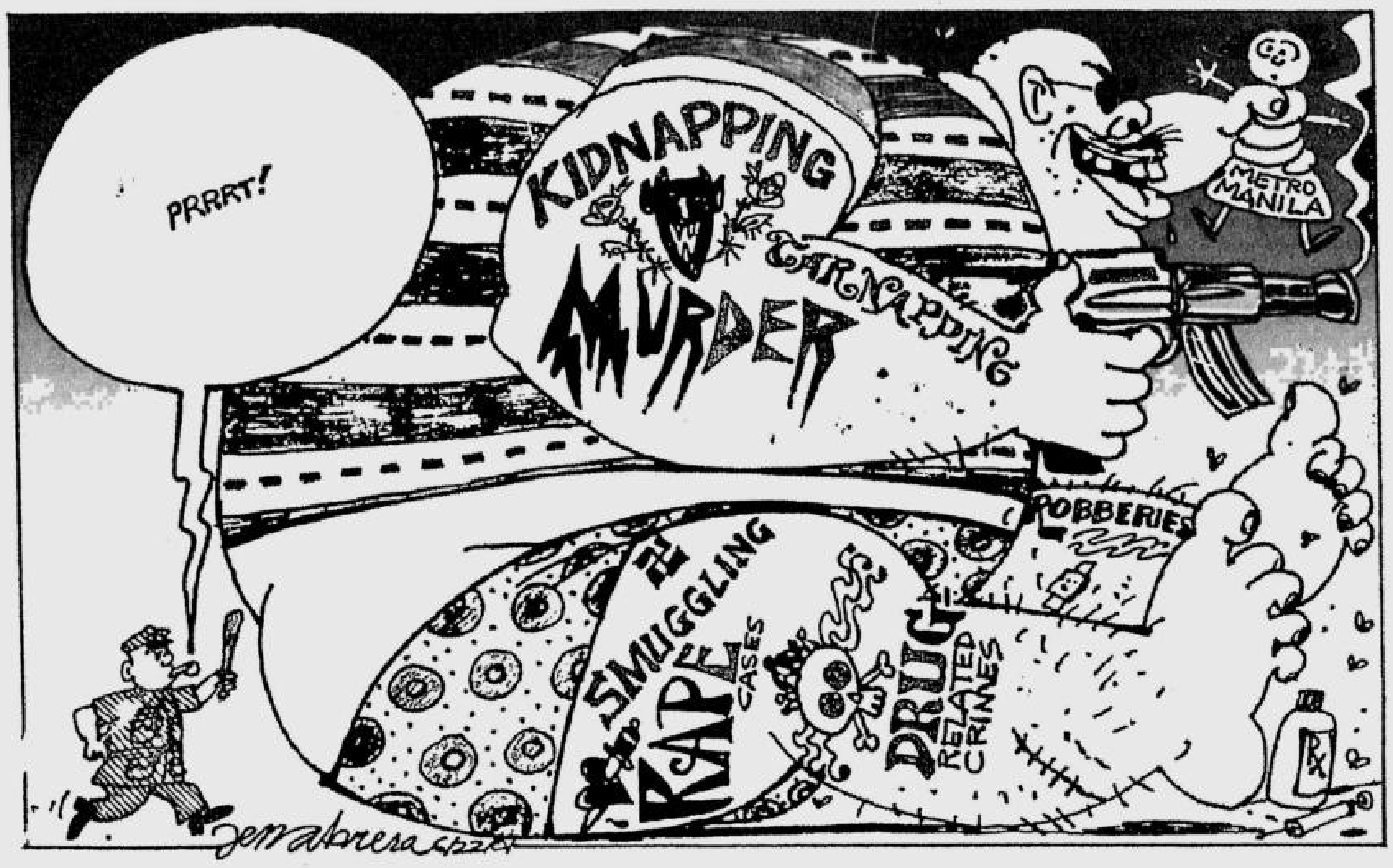

Conspiracy theorists

EDITORIAL

IT is entirely possible that the kidnapping of Mary Grace Rogasas, the daughter of businessman Robert Cheng, last Monday was part of a conspiracy to destabilize the Macapagal administration. But it is not for Malacañang or the Department of the Interior and Local Government to say so—without evidence, without a thorough investigation, without so much as a plan.

If Interior Secretary Jose Lina or whoever briefed the President before last Tuesday's press briefing thought that politicizing the crime was effective damage control, they should go back to crisis management school. By raising the conspiracy theory even before they had a handle on the facts, all they managed to do was to wreak more havoc on the administration.

In the absence of any proof to the contrary, the kidnap victims, which included the daughter's driver and her bodyguard, remain just that: victims. The family's refusal to cooperate with the police may be lamentable, but it is not in itself evidence of a staged event. The speedy release of the victims, after payment of a ransom that amounted to at least P10 million, may be unusual, but it is not in itself proof of a conspiracy. By acting churlishly in the face of a kidnapping that, for most Filipinos, ended positively enough, the conspiracy theorists merely called attention to the speculative basis of their allegation.

The kidnapping of a wealthy businessman's daughter, at 7:30 in the morning, right in front of the University of the Philippines College of Law, is the last thing this government needs. In the face of multiple peace and order crises—the Abu Sayyaf hostage-taking in the South, the New People's Army assassinations in Luzon, the suspicious series of kidnappings of Singaporean and British nationals in Metro Manila—a brazen kidnapping on the once-idyllic campus of the premier state university is no longer a mere index crime but the very index of unchecked criminality. What has made matters worse, however, is the administration's knee-jerk reaction. In a word, it has been spooked. By reacting wildly, however, it has undermined the already shaky confidence the public has in the government's capacity to impose order and stop crime.

The specter of a destabilization conspiracy is a stubborn ghost which returns to haunt those who claim to see it. It may be real, as in the May 1 assault on Malacañang, but for the public to believe the reports, the government cannot rely on mere stories, on the political equivalent of old wives' tales. In the absence of proof, the public will discount any conspiracy theory as mere ghost stories or political entertainment meant to divert attention from a law and order disaster. This is a pity, because when or if evidence of dirty tricks is finally presented, the public may no longer be capable of listening, or believing.

As a result of these missteps, Lina is now making the media rounds, trying to explain the conspiracy angle away. He finds himself in the untenable position of defending both what President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said, by stressing the context in which she said it, and promising radio anchors and even Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson, who felt alluded to in all the conspiracy talk, a thorough review of exactly what was said.

About the only good thing going for the government at this time, in this case, is its unwillingness to broach the Plaza Miranda angle. This is the possibility that, just as communist party founder Jose Ma. Sison directed the bombing in 1971 of those opposed to Ferdinand Marcos precisely to lay the blame on Marcos, the kidnapping in 2001 of the daughter of a friend of deposed President Joseph Estrada might have been perpetrated by those opposed to Ms Macapagal precisely to create trouble for her. Without proof of any kind, an allegation like this can only be counterproductive.

Never answer a hypothetical question, the axiom goes. Last Tuesday, visibly harassed administration officials broke a cardinal rule in politics by standing that old campaign axiom on its head. Forgetting the lessons of the past, the President and her men turned a factual question about the UP kidnapping into a hypothetical answer. Like most speculators, they are now paying a heavy price for it.

June is bursting out all over

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

JUNE is not only the month for brides, it is also the month of June bugs and fire trees which make their last hurrah as summer ends and the rainy season begins. I don't know why June is the favorite month for weddings but it is probably because it is wonderful in the cool nights to curl up in bed, feeling the warm body of your spouse and listening to the patter of the raindrops on the roof.

The June bug is not a bug but a beetle. Colored dark gray or shiny green, they come out in great numbers in June. The gray beetle is called *salagubang* and the green one *salaginto*. They sleep among the leaves during the day, waking up at sunset to fly into our homes, attracted by the bright lights. Children catch them, tie a sewing thread to one of the legs, and then let them fly round and over their heads. Or they stick a chewing gum to the backs of two beetles, stick them together back to back and let them wrestle. The two beetles are placed on their sides on a table. Both of them try to get right side up, carrying the other one upside down on its back. The beetle that ends with its legs up in the air loses.

People in the cities see few of them, there not being many trees whose tender shoots are their favorite food. But out in the countryside, there are many of them. You look up at the trees and you see them, their gray bodies dotting the green foliage. You shake a branch and they fall to the ground. Or you pick them off one by one with a pole.

Children keep them in small boxes or cans for playing with later, stuffing plenty of tender shoots with them to keep them eating happily. Some of the rural folks eat them like they do locusts.

At sundown, you see them flying off one by one from their perches and you hear the whirring sound of their wings. Soon they would be bumping against the electric light bulbs or flying dangerously close to the open fires of candles and gas lamps or even cooking stoves. If you live in the city, sometimes you'd hear them knocking on the window or the screens, wanting to get in, attracted by the lights inside. Sometimes you'd see and hear them whirring around the lights of the lampposts. If you do, you are one of the lucky ones in the city.

If you are also lucky enough to live where there are plenty of trees in the metropolis, you can't miss the red-orange blossoms of the fire trees. I pity those who live in treeless areas because a fire tree in bloom is a sight to behold.

Fire trees are a trademark of summer. They hang out their blossoms like banners as a tribute to summer. But in June, as the rains begin to fall, they have a second spurt, catching fire once more as if they're afraid to let go, wanting summer to stay longer.

The sight of a blossoming fire tree, even at the start of the rainy season, really entrenches summer in the heart and mind. When I open my eyes in the morning, I see the red blossoms of the fire tree in the backyard peeking in through the window, as if looking if I was already awake. And even if the rain is falling hard, I think it is still summer. Birds, too, think it is still summer because they twitter and play among the branches even in the rain.

If you want to see fire trees in bloom, there are a number in resplendent glory in the Diliman campus of the University of the Philippines. There are also a number of them scattered in various parts of Quezon City. You can see their red crowns even from far off.

If you happen to be driving through Laguna, pay a visit to the UP-Los Baños campus. There are many huge beautiful fire trees in bloom there. And if you are driving through the lakeshore towns of Rizal, drive through the town of Cardona. From a stretch of the road, you can see an island on fire in the middle of the water, not far from the shore. That is Cielito Lindo island, the love nest of the Jesse Bello couple, now both deceased but buried in their beloved island. They sleep beneath the flowering fire trees that make the island a sight to behold in summer. From a distance, the island is usually a dark green most of the year. But in summer, it turns red. And in late June or early July, it turns light green as new shoots come out.

Even if you live in the city, you must have noticed that the dark brown of empty lots, sidewalks and street islands, have suddenly turned light green. If you look closely, you see tiny shoots and blades of grass pushing up out of the ground. They have lain there sleeping for months, waiting for the raindrops to wake them up. In June, the first rains tap on their hard shells and call out: "Wake up, wake up. It's time to play and grow."

And the trillions of seeds wake up, push their tiny heads up to see the sunshine and grow up through the soil. They're not the only ones who hear the call. Trillions of insects also hear the knocking and the call and they wake up, getting out of their eggshells and cocoons to walk, crawl, slither, hop, jump and fly all over the grass and weeds, to play and grow and live and mate and lay eggs for the next generation of their kind. The eggs of frogs hatch into tadpoles and soon you will hear the croaking of the adult frogs accompanying the drumming of the raindrops on the roof.

For June is not only for brides, beetles and fire trees. While it signals the end of summer, it also signals the beginning of life.

An Oslo or a Munich?

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

THE DECLARATIONS of former Senators Jovito Salonga and Eva Kalaw that they believe Jose Ma. Sison masterminded the 1971 Plaza Miranda bombings have revived the debate over the character of the leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines. These are powerful accusations. Both senators were gravely injured in the incident. Salonga was clinically dead until the desperate efforts of his medical team managed to revive him. Under these circumstances, Sison's resort to his usual response, which is to blacken his critics by name-calling, has been ineffectual at best.

These are not mere historical or legal debates. They take place in the midst of suspended peace talks in Oslo over the question of the continued assassination of government officials by the organization Sison leads. Except as the law of the jungle, these murders are indefensible. And so the question has arisen: Has this particular leopard changed its spots?

Almost certainly not. The foul and intemperate language against the government coming out of Sison's base in The Netherlands, does not portray a statesman ready to take a responsible role in nation-building and has not helped enhance his credibility. After 33 years of trying to win national leadership, despite revolution and assassinations, despite propaganda and vitriol, despite the inestimable advantage of facing unpopular, corrupt and incompetent leaders of the Republic, and challenging an iniquitous economic system, reputable published surveys reveal that Sison remains by far the most reviled political figure in the country.

Plaza Miranda was shocking and not only because grenades were thrown indiscriminately to the stage where the opposition party was holding a campaign rally. If Sison were responsible, it would demonstrate a cold-blooded cynicism which his critics have long accused him of. Those grenades would have been thrown to wipe out the legitimate opposition, falsely blame the sitting government, demolish democracy and fuel revolution. Among its victims were the children of the poor who occupied the front ranks of the audience.

But that is not all. There is incontrovertible evidence of witnesses and forensics that in the 1980s, the CPP presided over a nationwide mass purge of its own comrades whom it suspected of being government agents. This example of "revolutionary justice" sent the innocent and guilty alike to torture and mass graves. It was described as our own version of the "Killing Fields" by survivors and caused others to bitterly denounce Sison as "our Pol Pot." To some of his own former comrades, Sison swims in an Olympic-sized pool of "blood debts" of his own fashioning. This is one of the primary reasons for the splits in the previously monolithic revolutionary movement.

The question then becomes: Assuming all this is true, on what principled basis are we to continue talks with the CPP-NDF? Until the recent spate of assassinations, there had been the hope that fundamental attitudes within the revolutionary movement might have changed. Grave doubts were suppressed in favor of that hope. We might not be able to forgive the enormity of the crimes but we would be willing to forget in the cause of peace.

The principal worry was what brief the government negotiators possessed. Peace without principle and, worse, without reason, has been a historical bane. When Neville Chamberlain appeased Hitler in Munich, he purchased a few months' peace, but his concessions guaranteed Hitler's swift conquests just months later and directly contributed to the deaths of millions.

It would help if both sides frankly tell us what they want. What does each side see as the ultimate result of an agreement? Is it to be a mere statement of generalities? A propaganda ploy? A tactic? A permanent halt to hostilities? A dismantling of the insurgency? How is the latter conceivable when each side has differing views on the very basics, as the recent spate of assassinations shows?

Both parties use the same words but mean different things. Democracy to the NDF means a communist dictatorship. Land reform means communal farms. Justice means summary killings of opponents. Human rights means the release of all their convicted cadres. Peace means the freedom of the CPP to pursue revolution unhindered. We have a confluence of words but not of ideas. When that happens, the most solemn agreements become, in Hitler's words, mere scraps of paper.

Yet, the GRP panel isn't making a strong stand on principle but whimpers, pleads and obfuscates. Former Speaker Jose de Venecia, who looks set to become Speaker again, is correct when he says that peace negotiations can only continue with an end to the political killings. De Venecia noted that Sison's group "cannot continue dispensing what it calls 'revolutionary justice' since there cannot be two systems of justice in the country."

But that is not the tone of the GRP panel. It is pleading with the NDF for an end to the killings, and not demanding it. It characterizes the current suspension of talks as a mere recess and says that the talks will definitely and unconditionally resume in August. What, it is fair to ask the GRP panel, does it believe in? Without animating principle, this is not peace but surrender.

The talks should therefore continue only if there is an immediate end to this spree of assassinations of civilians and government officials. How can the two panels talk about civil and political rights, or of anything else, when each has a profoundly divergent view of the matter at hand? Therefore, without a definition of terms arrived at quickly, it will be pointless to continue talking. Let us send Silvestre Bello III back to Oslo either without Chamberlain's furled umbrella, that hated symbol of appeasement at Munich, or not at all.

Ghosts of Plaza Miranda

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

FORMER SENATE President Jovito Salonga has come round to the view that it was the Communist Party of the Philippines that was responsible for the August 1971 Plaza Miranda bombing.

In making this conclusion in his memoirs, "A Journey of Struggle and Hope," Salonga has stood on its head the orthodox explanation that the late President Marcos instigated the massacre. In the logic of those times, Marcos was the primary suspect.

The heretical attack on this conventional explanation came earlier—in 1989, when American journalist Gregg Jones published the book, "The Red Revolution," which concluded that CPP chair, Jose Ma. Sison, and a small group in the central committee, plotted the bombing and indeed ordered some cadres to throw two grenades on the stage where the Liberal Party leaders were holding their *miting de avance*. Salonga was maimed but survived to tell his story 30 years after the carnage.

The talk about the inside story of the bombing pinpointing responsibility to Sison and his cabal had been going the rounds since the 1980s from insiders in the movement like military defector Victor Corpuz and Ariel Almendral. Salonga's book is based on Jones' book and evidence, as well as on the senator's independent sources from inside the party. The view from these pieces of evidence emerged that Sison and his group in the central committee staged the attack to, first, intensify the revolutionary situation as a stage to seize power; and two, drive an implacable wedge between the two main elite parties—the Liberal and Nacionalista parties. The bombing was expected to heap the blame on Marcos who, in turn, would blame the communists and launch an anti-communist crackdown. This scenario was partly fulfilled. Marcos staged the crackdown. One of his weapons was the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, which drove the two parties beyond reconciliation and which allowed him to press hard on communist suspects and sympathizers.

Sison's expectations of radicalizing the peasantry and the unions did not fully materialize. The crackdown intensified social unrest but not enough to make the communists and the moderates close ranks. It failed to ignite a revolutionary conflagration in the rural areas. The suspension of the writ of habeas corpus prefigured the proclamation of martial law in 1972—a project on which Marcos had been at work for more than a year following his reelection in 1969.

Jones sent me a galley-proof of his book in 1989 in Melbourne, where I was on sabbatical leave from the Manila Chronicle. I wrote a series of articles to the Chronicle, reviewing the book. The publication of the articles was one of the first authoritative presentations of the revisionist thesis. Sison's reaction, from the Netherlands, was as vehement as his reaction to Salonga's book which echoed Jones' thesis. At the time, the Filipino political elite still clung to the explanation that Marcos was responsible for the massacre. Accepting the revisionist thesis would mean rejecting the orthodox view—a difficult thing to do when the anti-Marcos feeling was still running high. It would, by implication, also mean clearing Marcos.

The Plaza Miranda bombing, to my mind, was a historical watershed. It marked the end of civility of political competition in Philippine democracy characterized by the regular alternation of parties taking power in the two-party system. The demise of the two-party system began at the Plaza Miranda carnage, the plaza ironically having been the symbol of democratic political competition. The principle underlying that competition was that elections institutionalized the notion of orderly change of power and of allowing space for the political opposition to regain power. The unspoken ground rules of political competition rejected the Darwinian notion of winner-take-all or of taking no prisoners.

That civility—or the middle ground that allows tolerance and compromise, creating stability in the two-party system—was bombed out in the Plaza Miranda attack. Regardless of whether the communists were responsible for the attack, the wholesale slaughter of opposition politicians signaled the shift of political competition to the mode of eliminating the opposition by violence. The incarceration of Benigno Aquino and opposition leaders confirmed this shift.

It was the bombing that eliminated this buffer zone of civility, but Marcos obliged the communists in closing the terrain of democratic competition. With Marcos planning to extend his rule beyond his constitutional tenure in 1973, and with the mounting social and political unrest and the communist insurgency, Marcos increasingly used the extraordinary powers of the presidency to completely eliminate the alternative elite—by declaring martial law in 1972.

As a casualty of the bombing, Plaza Miranda is no longer the ultimate venue of the *miting de avance*. After the bombing, Plaza Miranda's symbolic role as the arena for the freedom of assembly and of tolerance in democratic competition vanished. Indeed, the political rules of the game changed with the onset of martial law. The two parties were dismantled to make way for the one-party state of the Marcos dictatorship. The two-party system never recovered from the dictatorship. Despite the democratic restoration of 1986, multi-parties rose from the debris, providing the elements of an unstable coalition-building.

A new form of politics emerged after the fall of Marcos. It is the politics of populism which saw the toppling of an elected president—Joseph Estrada—in January 2001. But populism can also be everyone's weapon. It became the mobilizing theme to galvanize the poor behind populist leaders and even to use them to overthrow a government that won power also through populist street movements at Edsa. Salonga's book brought back the ghosts of an era in which political tolerance and civilized competition were the saving grace of democracy.

Magic realism in the headlines

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

PUBLISHERS and book editors abroad, says writer Krip Yuson, have begun asking Filipino writers to start exploring "genres other than magic realism" when writing about the Philippines.

The trouble is, Yuson points out, these writers are in fact writing only about day-to-day life in the Philippines. But what we tend to take for granted and absorb with equanimity is, for other people, the height of absurdity, wonderment, fantasy, myth and yes, fiction. How to explain the country, indeed?

How else are we to view, as Yuson hilariously recalled, the kidnapping by the Abu Sayyaf of vacationers from a posh resort including a prominent businessman/contractor with links to the past regime. The businessman is then one of the first hostages to escape the bandits, taking along a young boy and a "female companion." When rumors proliferate that he had somehow paid his way to freedom, the former hostage comes up with a story that he managed to elude his captors by dressing up as a doctor while the group holed-up in a hospital.

Add to Yuson's list of "magic realist" tales culled from today's headlines the controversy swirling around the kidnap and release of Mary Grace Cheng-Ragasa, who was abducted, along with her two bodyguards, from the UP campus. One would think authorities would celebrate Mary Grace's safe return to her family, instead, no less than the President tells the media that the Chengs may in fact have "conspired" with members of the opposition to create an atmosphere of lawlessness and thereby destabilize the administration. If true, what magnificent material it would make for a thriller, or a fabulist novel.

Great escapes, romantic intrigue, criminal conspiracies, staged abductions—how much more fantastical need a country be?

* * *

YUSON and I were reactors at an "encounter" with Arlene Chai, a writer based in Australia whose four novels harken to her Chinese-Filipino heritage and upbringing. Speaking before an audience among whom were her teachers and classmates at the Immaculate Conception Academy and Maryknoll, said Chai, was "like coming full circle." Joining the advertising industry "by accident" after graduation, she left the country in the '80s and joined her family in their new home in Sydney.

"I would never have become a writer if I hadn't left Manila," confessed Chai, and she would not have tried a hand at creative writing were it not for an impulsive decision to take a year off from her advertising work. Three months into the sabbatical, she found herself burdened with lots of idle time, prompting Chai to attempt a novel.

"I started recalling stories my mother told me, and became inspired by tidbits of her life, especially her stories about the war." In her first novel "The Last Time I Saw Mother," Chai writes of a mother and daughter who between them share a secret and in the telling discover the past and the future.

Though she sets "The Last Time" in Manila and brings back recollections of the country during the war, Chai fully recreates the Manila she grew up in only in her second novel, "Eating Fire and Drinking Water." Set in Manila in the early '80s, "Eating Fire" is a complicated tale with 39 characters replete with local color, political intrigue and a generous sprinkling of "magic realism."

"It started with the image of a woman with a stigmata," recalls Chai of her novel's origins. Then she began remembering details of the neighborhood of her childhood—the corner store run by a Chinaman, old houses on the street, a mansion now abandoned—and "the tale grew in the telling."

* * *

A SELF-CONFESSED "control freak," Chai speaks of learning to "let go" in the process of writing her novels.

"One lesson I have learned while writing is to trust the process," she shares. "At times the characters take over, and I have learned to let that happen, to not fight it and let the characters do as they please. For me, that is a sign that the book has taken on a life of its own."

For her third work, Chai chose to focus on the land of her ancestors, China. Remembering her father's stories about the island near Xiamen where he grew up, Chai conceived of a character who decides to return to the island to inter her father's ashes in the ancestral home. But then she got stuck in the opening chapter, not knowing where else to bring this central event.

Chai recalls taking a long walk during one such frustrating session before the computer, and turning over and over in her mind questions about her characters. It was during this walk, she says, that discovered the conflict at the heart of the book. "I asked myself: What if she can't enter the house? Why? Who owns the house now? How will she fulfill her father's dying wish? Right then, I knew I had a novel."

* * *

CHAI returns to "magic realist" terrain once more in her fourth and latest novel, "Black Hearts," which follows two "cruel sisters" and their struggle over ownership of an old mansion that is bequeathed by their grandmother to the sister who wishes to see it destroyed.

"It is the book I had the least control over," recalls Chai. "It was also the most interesting and challenging, and also the most draining. I haven't been able to write another book in the two years since."

Yuson says one reason "some of the best writing by Filipinos is being done abroad" is that their new homes not only allow for physical distance. Expat writers, he said, also enjoy "aesthetic distance" that allows them to write of their country and the people they know and love from a remove and with some objectivity.

Indeed, it is distance that allows them to write of the absurd and magical in Filipino life, "without having to compete with the daily headlines."

Old notebooks, old bookstores

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

NOTEBOOKS are very personal things. I always remind my students that if they photocopy a diligent classmate's notebook and use it for an open-notes, open-books exam, it does not work as well as notes they themselves took. I have many notebooks of different sizes, part of the junk I have yet to turn over to the UP archives. I take particular care of notebooks after Jose Rizal's grandniece, Asuncion Lopez-Bantug, who lost a lifetime of notebooks courtesy of a diligent maid. All her notebooks were in a corner of her bedroom untouched for decades and naturally dusty. When she was in the United States some years ago, her maid cleaned out her bedroom and threw out all her notebooks. She had a fit upon arrival and cried. The maid's reaction? "Why is the *señora* upset? All I did was throw away those old notebooks. They were filled up and useless anyway. Is this the thanks I get for cleaning her bedroom?" Future Rizal scholars have lost a treasure, at least I have access to Ms Bantug's frail memory.

Opening my notebooks recently I realized that I spend a lot of time collecting useless information. Or maybe the data are useless at the time until I weave them into a column or use the details to spice up an otherwise boring academic paper. The notes from the prewar Free Press are quite varied. There was a 1927 article on the Libreria Manila Filatelica , the famous bookstore near the Liceo de Manila, which had the reputation as the one that sold the most advanced and anarchical books. Today, the place to go for radical books is Popular Bookstore on Doroteo Jose beside Mapua. Manila Filatelica, owned by Remigio Garcia, began as a center for stamp collectors and branched out into books in 1902.

As a bookstore it became the barometer of intellectual and social trends. 1927 was a bad year for the bookstore, sale of Spanish books dropped significantly and this was not a good sign for the future. Manila Filatelica only carried Spanish books, with a few textbooks in English and its sales reflected a decline in reading and a decline in Spanish. Garcia's bestseller was "Modelo de cartas" where everyone including houseboys copied their love letters to send swooning girlfriends (and mistresses). Then he sold a lot of postcards of movie stars which was good business but described as "*una barbaridad.*" People would see a movie and dash to the shop for a picture.

Among Filipino authors, Rizal was the bestseller with 2,707 copies of the "Noli Me Tangere" and 1,914 of the "El Filibusterismo" sold. Next was T.M. Kalaw's bilingual (English/Spanish) "Historia de la Revolucion Filipina" and "Tratado de Masoneria" that sold well. Balmori's "Se Deshojo la Flor" was out of print and out of stock while "Bancarrota de Almas" had a few remaining copies. After novels, the next bestsellers were political books which probably reflected the signs of the times because the more vitriolic, the faster it sold. Garcia also described the *afición loca* for poetry as readers devoured Claro M. Recto's "Bajo los Cocoteros" and Fernando Guerrero's "Crisalidas." One day a future historian will look at the bestseller list of Philippine bookstores in 2001 and see dictionaries, self-help, inspirational books and pulp American bestsellers on the list. What does that say of our times?

Speaking of changing times. I found an editorial "Ships of death" on an accident concerning inter-island shipping in Negros. Same thing we have today—old overcrowded vessels. What else is new? During the summer everyone sported short hair to beat the heat. In 1927 there were men who were "aggravated by the masculine appearance of femininity." Rep. Pascual Azanza of Samar, actually proposed a bill for an annual tax of P30, payable in full within the first 20 days of January, for women above 15 years of age who sported cropped hair! Violators were to be punished with imprisonment ranging from one to six months.

Some schools refused to admit girls over 14 with bobbed hair. The provincial board of Negros Occidental proposed an ordinance, part of which reads: "If girls must emulate their brother's styles, then let them pay P30 a year. Girls are going too far when they insist on cropping their hair. It makes them look masculine, disgusting and disgraceful, morally and physically. They look more like men than women." Filipinas were lucky when a change in style was brought in by Gloria Swanson who sported shoulder-length hair.

Aside from hair, the length of a skirt or a hemline was news in 1927. An article titled "El Triunfo de la falda corta (The triumph of short skirts)," narrated how, at 9 p.m. in January 1927, a certain detective Townsend arrested a 15-year-old *mestiza*, Victoria Charles, on Avenida Rizal. Victoria was asleep on a *carromata,* unmindful that her short skirt had risen way over her knees. She was brought to the fiscal's office and was the first to be charged under a revised municipal ordinance on "indecent acts." Victoria spent the night crying in the small Bagumbayan jail before she was acquitted by Jose A. del Prado of the municipal court.

Reading these notes from 1927 shows that times have changed very much indeed.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Freedom and diplomacy

COMMENTARY

Natalia M.L.M Morales

IT was a testy Independence Day celebration: the first under the Macapagal administration. The occasion should have been a jubilant day for celebration. It followed a few months after another historic people power victory and close on the heels of a failed, blasted, spontaneous populist outburst of May 1. But June 12 this year tempered whatever buoyancy the national freedom day could command. President Macapagal looked like she was on a brief national time-out from a very pressing matter. Her countenance during Tuesday's *vin d'honneur* at the Malacañang Palace was solemn but stern. What freedom to celebrate when the national angst was turned not against any foreign imperial power or local autocrats but a rowdy hand of misplaced rebels? Its acts against humanity negated whatever ideological pretensions it may have had, made worse by its opportunist and mercenary character. The Abu Sayyaf is a lesson in the rhetorics and practice of national liberation. The enemy is not just outside; it is within each one of us, by contempt, ignorance, indifference, insensitivity as well as plain irresponsibility.

Could one blame the lady President then who despite her cool green *baro't saya* might as well have donned a khaki and fatigue uniform to symbolize the national rage?

Protocol-wise the *vin d'honneur* is a diplomatic occasion, requiring some acceptable mode of language and emotions. As such, its character is the composite of illustrious and highly civil representatives of peace-loving nations with which we decide to connect and relate for larger global interests. Diplomats, by nature and training, carry their patience and tolerance to an extreme degree, avoiding situations where tempers and tantrum could flare. What one heard from the President on that polite but purportedly festive occasion, however, was a cry of belligerence fit for warriors in the battlefield. Even while watching the ceremonies on TV, one could sense an unexpected hush and shock to have descended on the polite and honorable company with the announcement of the alleged beheading of Guillermo Sobero, an American hostage. The Abu Sayyaf could have rejoiced at the unsolicited declaration of its paradox and undeserved visibility in that Freedom Day program. For those who came in late in the broadcast and news, and those who have the penchant for news verification (which is requisite in cautious diplomatic reporting), the President's more than candid and graphic words, incongruous as they were, swiftly transformed Malacañang's ceremonial to a "theater of horrors." Pity the diplomats who came to pay tribute to the dynamism of Philippine freedom, only to cast doubts on its meaning and mourn for the dead hostages, and the nation in general.

Diplomats are said to be the "eyes, ears, mouth and limbs" for their countries. As envoys, they represent the state and their leaders—whether these are monarchs, presidents, prime ministers or the Pope. By reverse, they are the channels by which the wishes and sentiments of their host country are transmitted to their own countries and people. One can imagine what images of, and emotions about, and from the Philippines, had been conveyed to our friends worldwide with such contratemp declarations. True, the standards of diplomacy cannot be imposed on the head of state. The president of the Philippines has command responsibility over the lives and welfare of its citizens, and the citizens and nationals of friendly countries who happen to be in one's shores. Perhaps, the President had no other choice. To declare the national angst in the company of representatives of friendly countries may invoke their support in waging war against the stark use of violence and terrorism. This national duty however must be tempered with balanced judgment and a regard for taste for the occasion and the participants. The response of the Papal Nuncio to the presidential speech was the embodiment of diplomatic language expressing his best wishes and concern over the national dilemma in a general, sensible way, directed not to hurt or condemn anyone, even the perceived enemy.

If President Macapagal committed a diplomatic "slip of the tongue," she could be pardoned for presumably, the national rage is greater than regard for civilities. But who can assuage the feelings of the victim's loved ones, friends and even the government who may feel a sense of betrayal on an occasion where harmony and understanding must be fostered, not pain and bitterness? A protocol stickler and adviser may push for the cancellation of the social toast. Freedom Day could be declared as a National Day of Prayer for the captive and dead hostages. Perhaps, the presidential mien and reaction would be more fitting for national and civilized empathy. This would however dampen the marking of the first Independence Day celebration after the second people power victory. It is a hard choice to make, but the integrity of a grieving nation would have been sustained and saved our President from what may turn out to be unwarranted and ignominious disclosures.

Presidential acts and decisions carry a wide degree of latitude, but also responsibility. Diplomatic representatives do not. They are expected to hew to official policies and declarations of their home governments. Equally, they are expected to give the highest regard to the wellness, wishes and sentiments of their host governments and their citizens. It is accepted practice of good relations that diplomatic speeches and messages before they can be delivered in public must be read first by the host's protocol office for any controversial or prejudicial remarks that can mar the relations between two countries. This is why diplomatic language is very often neutral, non-committal and by custom, dull. Diplomats are not geared to provoke, but to mediate, assuage and reach out.

President Macapagal, in the few months she has been in office, has been relentless in her crusade against the terrorism and inhumanity of the Mindanao rebels. Her "I will crush you" and "*isang bala ka lang*" outbursts and threats belie what may be outright demoralization and fatigue of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The war in Mindanao should be fought not just by arms or monetary rewards that can further provoke the enemies and even match in their new acquisitions of weapons and mastery of the terrain. Something is missing. We got a clue of this in the presidential conduct at the June 12 *vin d'honneur*.

All is not lost though if our President and her advisers reflect on, and try to reverse in practice a German military epigram—to wage war not through sheer reliance on raids and bullets but through the sensitive calibration of diplomatic approach. It can be tough, but it might just bring us the much sought difference and solution for national peace and reconciliation.

Natalia M.L.M. Morales is professor of Political Science and International Studies at the University of the Philippines- Diliman and editor of the Foreign Relations Journal.

THEY SAID

Tough campaign

"The campaign was really tough. People were divided down the line—pro-Erap and anti-Erap. Yes, it was taxing emotionally."
—*Sen. Franklin Drilon*

Firsts

"We have always been first in Southeast Asia in the first half of the 20th century. First in the region, first in politics and first in the economy. We can regain that position in the new millennium."
—*Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon*

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LETTERS

Deceptive MWSS-Maynilad agreement

WE of the Freedom from Debt Coalition denounce in the strongest possible terms the memorandum of cooperation signed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Board of Trustees and Maynilad Water Services Inc. We do not recognize the agreement forged by the MWSS allowing Maynilad to accelerate the recovery of its losses and consequently to impose an additional P5 per cubic meter on the price of water.

The memorandum is illegal, deceptive and duplicitous.

It is illegal because it violates the Concession Agreement which the MWSS and Maynilad entered into in 1997 when the latter won the bidding for water servicing in the West Zone area. Under the contract, Maynilad can only recover its losses due to exchange rate fluctuations within a 22-year period. The recently signed memorandum changes the terms of the contract as it allows Maynilad to recover its current P3 billion losses in only 18 months, and to get back the losses it shall incur thereafter within two years.

The signing of the memorandum violates the process provided for in the Concession Agreement. Under the agreement, any petition for an extraordinary price adjustment (EPA) must first be subjected to a thorough examination by the technical staff of the Regulatory Office (RO) and must undergo a process of public hearings and consultations. Yet, this memo was designed and approved in closed-door meetings of Maynilad, MWSS, Neda and finance department officials.

The memo is deceptive and duplicitous because it practically allows an automatic Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment (auto-Cera), which Maynilad had earlier asked for but was rejected after it became a subject of public protests. The memo grants what is essentially the same arrangement Maynilad wanted, although it is no longer called auto-Cera.

The MWSS and Maynilad are trying to justify the memorandum through the EPA provision in the Concession Agreement. But in the process, they are also violating the same EPA provision. The original contract provides that a petition for an EPA must first be filed with the Regulatory Office, which in turn would evaluate and reject or approve the petition. But the MWSS and Maynilad are disregarding the rules on the EPA and have now come up with a memorandum allowing Maynilad to increase water rates without undergoing the process the EPA provision requires.

Overall, the memorandum cheats the original contract and cons the public. *Ang* memorandum *ng* MWSS *at* Maynilad *ay ilegal batay sa batas. Dinadaya ang kontrata at niloloko ang publiko.*

We hold the Maynilad officials, the MWSS Board of Trustees and Chief Regulator Rex Tantiongco directly accountable for this illegal, duplicitous and fraudulent act.

We denounce Tantiongco for shamelessly putting the vested interests of Maynilad ahead of his sworn obligations as chief regulator. For the past six months, Tantiongco has been an advocate of the auto-Cera within the MWSS Board of Trustees. The minutes of their meetings will bear this out. He has acted not as a regulator but as a broker and spokesperson for Maynilad.

Tantiongco should be removed from office. He has lost the moral authority and public confidence required to discharge his duties as chief regulator.

We demand that the MWSS Board of Trustees be immediately replaced. By signing the memorandum of cooperation, its members have misrepresented and compromised the interests of the public they were mandated to serve. The approval of the agreement imply that they are amenable to a rate increase despite the absence of an investigation on Maynilad's so-called losses.

We demand that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo revoke the agreement between the MWSS and Maynilad. We challenge her to undertake serious reforms in the water industry that would strengthen regulation and ensure consumer protection.—**LIDY NACPIL, secretary general, Freedom from Debt Coalition, 34 Matiaga St., Central District, Quezon City**

Some facts about June 12, 1898

WHY do we peddle a myth in our celebration of our Independence Day? Why are we miseducating our people by giving the impression that the proclamation of independence was read in the morning of June 12 instead of in the afternoon? Impressive were the simultaneous raising of the Philippine flags at the Luneta; the Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit, Cavite; the Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan; and Barasoain Church in Malolos, Bulacan, but does that alter the fact that people had to trek to Cavite and could only participate in the afternoon affair?

And who says that Caviteños sang "Bayang Magiliw" during the proclamation? The first title of our national anthem was "Marcha Filipina Magdalo." Later, the title of the anthem was changed to "Marcha Nacional Filipina." Jose Palma provided the lyrics in 1899 under the title "Filipinas" and the words were in Spanish. The English translation, "Land of the Morning," was done by Osias and Lane. Certainly "Bayang Magiliw" is of later vintage.

Next time we celebrate Independence Day, let us remind ourselves that the proclamation was in the afternoon and the national anthem was a march played by the Banda de Malabon from Cavite (General Trias) and not Banda de Malabon from Rizal. And, no one sang the National Anthem in Filipino because Julian Felipe's composition had no lyrics.—**SAMUEL P. FERNANDEZ, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Sta. Mesa, Manila**

Magic-realist

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SPOKE to a bunch of students some weeks ago, and someone asked why I kept saying this country was a magic-realist one.

Well, because the strangest things keep happening to it, I said. After I said this, I was struck by one of the strangest, most sublimely ironic, most magic-realist things ever to have happened to this country. Which was that over our last 100 years of solitude, or history, most of the great projects the Filipino *masa* has carried out for the right reasons have produced the wrong results. And the one project the Filipino *masa* has carried out for the wrong reasons has produced the right results.

The first great project was the Katipunan and the war for independence it spawned. That was the handiwork of the *masa*. The Philippine Revolution of 1896 will always carry the distinction of having been started not by a bourgeois but by a plebeian, who was Andres Bonifacio. That was not the case with the other nationalist movements in the colonial world. The wars of liberation of Latin America were spearheaded by the Creoles, the Spaniards born in the colonies who no longer saw themselves as Spanish but as Latin Americans. And the struggle for independence in other parts of the Third World in the 20th century were led by representatives of the native upper class, like Gandhi and Nehru. "The revolt of the masses" was how Teodoro Agoncillo called Bonifacio's revolution—it is the title of his book on the Katipunan. It truly was so.

We all know what happened to that great project. It was hijacked by Emilio Aguinaldo, a representative of the *principalia*, the rural gentry, who went on to have Bonifacio executed. And that wasn't the end of it. It was further hijacked by the *ilustrados*, when it offered the prospect of victory against the Spaniards. It was the *ilustrados* who negotiated the pact of Biak na Bato, which temporarily ended hostilities between the Filipino revolutionaries and the Spanish government. And it was the *ilustrados* who swiftly abandoned the revolution when the Americans came. "*Iba ang naghain, iba ang kumain,*" says a local proverb—someone prepared the food, somebody else ate it. That's been the story of the *masa's* life.

Yet another great project began by the *masa* was the war of liberation against the Japanese. That was the guerrilla movement during World War II. It was effectively mounted in Central Luzon by the Huks, who were mostly farmers who had joined the communist movement. Most of the members of the guerrilla movement in the Visayas and Mindanao were poor folk as well, led by officers, some of whom had barely gone past basic military training, who claimed allegiance to the Usaffe. When MacArthur returned, as he had presumably promised—it is not only Erap that is the product of myth, much of American rule is—the war had already pretty much been won by the guerrillas. All MacArthur did was to mess up the victory, marching in a rush to Manila—much as Dewey had done half a century before to prevent the locals who had also already won the war from entering it first—and stoking the Japanese to murderous rampage.

Having appropriated the victory, the Americans dictated the shape of the postwar world, reconstituting the elite, which specifically meant dropping the collaboration trials as most of the prominent figures were tainted with collaboration. Only one minor official got convicted there. Before the decade was out, most of the collaborators had regained their political and economic clout. The *masa* on the other hand, who had shed Churchillian blood, sweat and tears in ousting the Japanese, got nothing. Six Democratic Alliance candidates, led by Huk leader Luis Taruc, won in the 1946 elections on the strength of the peasant vote but never got to serve in Congress: they were ousted on the charge of committing electoral fraud. Which drove them back to the hills. The peasants who had occupied the lands abandoned by the landlords during the war were forthwith ousted by those same landlords who never said "I shall return," but did. *Iba ang naghain, iba ang kumain.*

Yet a third great project of the *masa* was the first Edsa. It was true people power not just in that it was a popular revolt against Marcos but in that it was authored by the *masa* themselves. The Edsa Revolution did not begin with the death of Ninoy Aquino, though that arguably lit the fuse. It began with the deaths of the thousands of activists, revolutionaries and common folk who were tortured, "salvaged" and made to disappear. Or more to the point, it began with the life of struggle Filipinos, many of them barely past the first flush of youth, lived out in the dead of martial law.

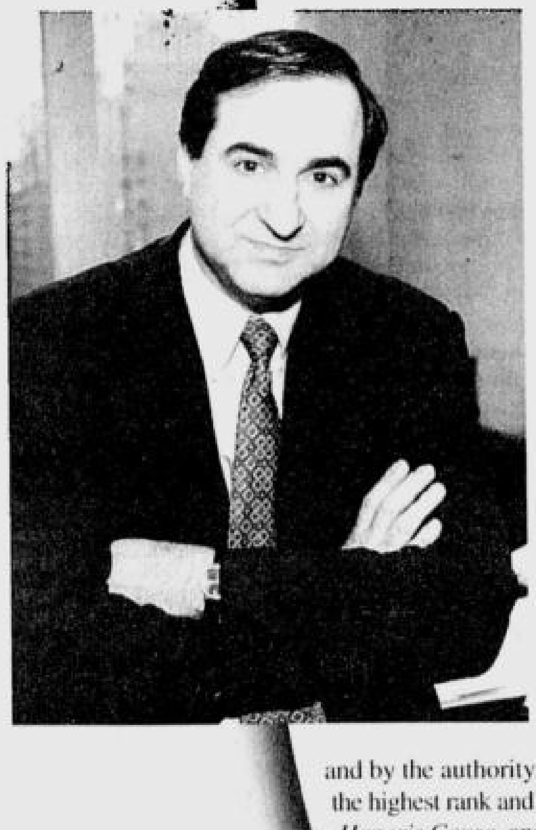
We all know too what happened to that revolution. It became officially known as the revolution authored by Cory Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Fidel Ramos and assorted "Yellow" personalities who were largely representatives of the elite. With authorship went claims to privilege, which spawned pillage of proportions that at its height rivaled that of martial law itself. The *masa* was again turned out of the gates, and in many instances from their mortal shells, becoming victims of disappearances, "salvagings" and massacres in a counterinsurgency campaign that little distinguished between sympathizer and enemy, civilian and combatant.

And finally, one still great project of the *masa* was Edsa II, which truly was people power in every sense of the word. It was an event that drew people from all walks of life, among them the *masa*, grown indignant from watching the telenovela known as the impeachment trial. It thrust Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo into office, who forthwith appointed Ramos', Cory's and Sin's protégés to key positions, with token representatives from the NGOs. And for a while, Edsa II looked headed in the same direction as the Philippine Revolution, the guerrilla war and Edsa I, a thing the elite would routinely appropriate and profit from.

And then came "Edsa III."

Unlike all of the above, which the *masa* mounted for the noblest ends, "Edsa III" was mounted by the *masa* for a truly benighted end. At least at the level of its stated intention, which was to show support for Erap, a morally convicted thief if not a legally convicted one. Beyond its articulated intention, it was also the poor proclaiming their existence in the most strident, and indeed violent, terms. And suddenly, after this miserable display of blindness, ignorance and superstition—if not in fact stupidity, as many Edsa II veterans kept saying—we began to take the poor seriously. We began to ask what it meant to be poor, what the poor wanted, how the poor could be educated. Probably for the first time in our lives.

Isn't that a little too magic-realist?



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Truce about to collapse; US steps up peace drive

JERUSALEM—Israel reported new flashes of violence yesterday as the United States stepped up efforts to hold together an Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire which is in danger of collapse after 10 killings in one week.

US President George W. Bush telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat late Wednesday to urge them to honor the truce brokered last week by US Central Intelligence Agency chief George Tenet.

Bush called on the two leaders to make an "all-out effort" to stop the violence and announced he was sending US Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region next week to "secure efforts to preserve the ceasefire and build upon it".

Since the truce began on Wednesday, six Palestinians and four Israelis have been killed, mortar bombs have landed on Jewish settlements in Gaza and several dozen Palestinians have been wounded in confrontations with Israeli troops.

In the latest violence, the Army said Palestinians fired a large mortar bomb at a collective farm inside Israel along the Gaza border early yesterday. The blast shattered windows of cars more than 50 m away but no one was hurt.

"This represents an escalation in the Palestinian violence and in the size of weapon used against Israel," the Army said in a statement.

The Army also said its troops had come under fire overnight in two areas of the Gaza Strip, and three hand grenades were thrown at soldiers near the border with Egypt. No one was hurt.

Palestinian witnesses said the town of Nazlet Issa, near the administrative border with Israel, had been placed under curfew. The report was not immediately confirmed, but Israel Radio said shots had earlier been fired from the area at an Israeli car.

The Palestinians, who began an uprising against Israeli occupation in Gaza and the West Bank nearly nine months ago, did not comment on the new violence. They blame Israel for the bloodshed which has killed almost 600 people since last September.

"The situation we have lived in for the past nine months is such that we have been in a state of self-defense in the face of Israeli aggression," Jibril Rajoub, the top Palestinian security official in the West Bank, told Voice of Palestine radio.

Israel's security cabinet said after a special session on Wednesday it would continue to observe the truce, before a trip by Sharon to meet Bush at the White House next Tuesday.

But the Cabinet said Israel would not fully lift blockades or implement any timetable for a troop withdrawal in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until there is "a cessation of terror."

A trilateral committee of Israeli, Palestinian and US security officials met to discuss a timetable for implementing terms of the ceasefire at a Jerusalem hotel late on Wednesday.

Israel Radio reported the meeting ended without progress, but Rajoub said: "It was constructive and we agreed to conduct extensive meetings in the coming 48 hours."

Bush urged Arafat in a 10-minute telephone conversation "to seize the moment and work with 100 percent effort to reduce violence and fight terrorism," US National Security Council spokesperson Sean McCormack said.

But the Palestinian leader accused Israel of trying to fool the world while dragging its feet on ending its crippling blockades of Palestinian areas.

"It is an attempt to deceive international public opinion," he told reporters in the West Bank earlier on Wednesday. "Their claims to be committed to a ceasefire are a lie."

The sides regularly trade blame for violating the truce, intended to end fighting in which at least 461 Palestinians, 116 Israelis and 13 Israeli Arabs have been killed.

The killings of four Jewish settlers in the first week of the ceasefire and mortar attacks in Gaza have infuriated Israel. Palestinians are angry at Israel's failure to lift blockades which have devastated the economies of the West Bank and Gaza. *Reuters*

Suicide bombers: 'Pushed into a corner'

By Karin Laub

QALQILIYA, West Bank—They were inseparable. The shy electrician and the mischievous religion student would rise before dawn to pray together at a mosque, and in their free time tutor young boys in math or practice karate kicks at the Islamic Sports Club.

Both were suicide bombers-in-waiting.

First to go was Fadi Amer, 23, who kept rabbits on the roof of his home in the West Bank town of Qalqiliya, and was studying to become a preacher. In late March, explosives hidden under an oversized jacket, he blew himself up at a gas station in Israel, just a short walk from his home, and killed two Jewish seminary students, ages 14 and 16.

His mother heard the boom from her house, not knowing what it was.

Two months later, Saeed Hotary, 22, who decorated his bedroom wall with anguished love poems and drawings of flowers, stood in line outside a crowded dance hall in Tel Aviv, wrapped in explosives. He killed 21 young Israelis and himself.

These two young men, consumed by hatred of Israel and promised paradise in the afterlife, were celebrated by many Palestinians as martyrs.

After nine months of fighting with Israel, adoration for militants, whether bombers or armed militiamen, is widespread in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and most moderates keep silent.

According to a poll of 1,100 people by Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, support for suicide bombings is at an all-time high of 75 percent, compared with 28 percent four years ago, when hopes were still alive that peace talks would lead to independence.

Many Palestinians see the suicide bombings, which have stunned the world with their calculated cruelty, as payback for the deaths of nearly 500 Palestinians, including dozens of children, by Israeli Army fire.

"Israel pushes us into a corner and leaves us no choice. If they kill our children, we should kill theirs," said Fadi's father, Attallah Amer, 52.

Israel says the Palestinians have largely themselves to blame for their troubles—that they rejected a good peace offer and went to war, cynically sending children to the front lines.

It says its measures are required to maintain security and accuses the Palestinian government, media and clergy of fanning the hatred.

Palestinians say they don't need prodding. They say resentment grows every time a student misses an exam because of the blockade or bills pile up in the home of a laborer who lost his job in Israel.

It is a vicious circle that has gone on for a decade: A suicide bomber strikes, so Israel imposes a blockade to keep other bombers out. As days pass and no bombs go off, the blockade is eased. Back come the bombers, back comes the blockade, and so on.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, the two main militant groups, have carried out more than two dozen suicide bombings and killed more than 200 people, most of them Israelis, since peace talks that they saw as a sellout began in 1993.

In the unforgiving climate of today, the militants say they have an unlimited army of bombers at the ready.

A fertile recruiting ground is An Najah University in the West Bank town of Nablus, the Palestinians' largest university, with 10,000 students. Three recent bombers were students at this Hamas stronghold, including two from the engineering department.

At the entrance to the department, a blue-and-white Israeli flag drawn with crayons is taped to the floor, and teachers and students en route to classes trample on it. Corridors are covered with portraits of bombers posing with grenades and rifles.

Jamal Nasser, 23, a deeply devout loner from Nablus, was recruited after joining the engineering department last fall. In April, he blew up a rigged car near an Israeli school bus, killing himself but harming no Israelis.

In his final weeks, he had dropped hints, telling his sisters he would marry in heaven and demanding that they become better Muslims. In a letter, he said he was driven by "love for my God and martyrdom, and my desire to take revenge for the blood of the martyrs killed in the uprising."

"He was influenced by his colleagues at the university," said his sister, Ranna, in her 20s.

His mother, Laila, 50, was torn between grief and pride. She had hoped to see her son graduate and marry, but she also wore a green scarf with Islamic verses—a gift from Hamas, which now supports the family with a monthly stipend of undisclosed amount.

Amer's mother, Naheel, 44, still feels nothing but loss and anger. She can barely sleep or work.

"I feel that those who sent him stole my son," she said quietly.

The Hamas student leader at An Najah, Mohammed Sabha, 27, had been high on Israel's wanted list for years. He was arrested in May when he left the safety of Palestinian-ruled Nablus, apparently to transport weapons in a car, and was caught at an Israeli roadblock. *AP*

Blunders trigger order to review FBI

WASHINGTON—With the FBI under fire from the Senate Judiciary Committee for a series of blunders, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced on Wednesday a "comprehensive review" of the federal law enforcement agency.

Minutes before a committee hearing to consider how to restore confidence in the FBI, Ashcroft directed a high-level Justice Department group called the "Strategic Management Council" to propose reforms by Jan. 1.

The group, chaired by the deputy attorney general, should recommend actions aimed at "improving and upgrading the performance of the FBI," Ashcroft said in a memo calling for the review.

In the first in a series of hearings being held by new Democratic Chairman Patrick Leahy of Vermont, the committee planned to focus on FBI policies and will review whether there is adequate oversight of it and how it can be improved.

"The FBI has long been considered a crown jewel of law enforcement agencies," Leahy said in opening the hearings. "Unfortunately today it has lost a lot of its earlier luster."

He said the image of the FBI for too many Americans has become one of an agency that is "unmanageable, unaccountable and unreliable."

"It's much vaunted independence has transformed for some into an image of insular arrogance," he said.

Former Republican Sen. John Danforth of Missouri, who investigated the FBI's conduct in the 1993 standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, was to testify about the resistance he faced in getting documents from the law enforcement agency for his review.

Danforth was appointed special counsel in 1999 to investigate the Waco stand-off after FBI officials revealed that potentially incendiary tear gas canisters were fired on the Branch Davidian compound.

His investigation concluded the canisters did not start the fires on April 19, 1993 that wiped out the compound in which 80 sect members died. The fires ended a 51-day stand-off that began when four federal agents were killed trying to conduct a raid on the compound.

"The FBI did not do the dark things some people suspected," Danforth said in testimony prepared for the hearing. But he added that some FBI personnel and justice department lawyers were not forthcoming about events at Waco.

"I think that the motive is not to hide evil deeds, but to avoid embarrassment. A long-standing value of the FBI is not to embarrass the FBI," he said.

Also testifying at the hearing is former FBI and CIA Director William Webster, who was tapped by FBI Director Louis Freeh to investigate security at the law enforcement agency after the arrest of former FBI agent Robert Hanssen on charges of spying for Moscow.

Hanssen was charged with 21 counts of espionage for allegedly selling US secrets to Moscow since 1985 for $1.4 million in money and diamonds. He has pleaded not guilty.

Convicted bomber Timothy McVeigh's execution was delayed for a month because the FBI discovered it had thousands of pages of documents never turned over to the defense.

Other incidents that have dented the bureau's image in recent years including its investigation of Taiwan-born nuclear scientist Wen Ho Lee and its handling of a stand-off with a white separatist and his family at Ruby Ridge, Idaho.

Just last week an FBI employee was arrested for allegedly selling bureau secrets to the Mafia and criminal defense lawyers over the past 19 months for thousands of dollars. *Reuters*

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VISAYAS
Eddie M. Lora
Ibarra, Maasin, Southern Leyte
42 years old

MINDANAO
Elby J. Braga
Blk. 6, Lot 2, Justice St., SGR Village
Catalunan Grande, Davao City
36 years old

SECOND PRIZES

Ford F·150 XLT Styleside 4x2 Automatic

GMA
Luisito T. Peña
2969 A. Bautista St., Punta
Sta. Ana, Manila
48 years old

LUZON
Ma. Ofelia A. dela Cruz
c/o Elaine Lazaro Blk. 8 Lot 20 Matahimik St.
Maunlad Home Phase 1, Caingin, Malolos, Bulacan
18 years old

VISAYAS
Cedic A. Abas
57 Puntod, Alaska, Mambaling
Cebu City
29 years old

MINDANAO
Virginia Aguirre
Zone Aries I, Suarez
Iligan City
46 years old

THIRD PRIZES

Ford RANGER XLT 4x2

GMA
Sylvia C. Ordoñez
87 Bohol St., Ayala Alabang Village
Muntinlupa City 45 years old

Rubi T. Cruz
928 A. Rodriguez Ave. Brgy. San Roque
Cainta, Rizal 72 years old

LUZON
Elvira C. Lumba
110 Zulueta St., Pob. 1
Marilao Bulacan 34 years old

Trinity Pintor
Blk. 1 Lot 19 Maligaya St. Villa Corazon
Subd. II Del Rosario, Naga City 11 years old

VISAYAS
Joanna P. Empio
Villa Valeta, Bacolod City
19 years old

Vilma F. Infante
Purok Violeta, Brgy. Taculing, Bacolod City
Negros Occidental 46 years old

MINDANAO
Claudia L. Barangan
137 Quezon St., 7023 Molave
Zamboanga del Sur 48 years old

Dionisio M. Alabata Jr.
Brgy. 30-C Monteverde St. Davao City
24 years old

FOURTH PRIZES P200,000

GMA

Emar G. Pascual
96 Congressional Road
Project 8, Quezon City
27years old

Rosauro A. Cruz
46 Magdalena Homes
F. Antonio St., Malinao, Pasig City
44 years old

VISAYAS

Lineth M. Villavicencio
Aguilar St., Hinigaran
Negros Occidental
24 years old

Jona D. dela Cruz
Pres. Roxas, Capiz 5803
18 years old

[illegible]or D. Gulang
[illegible] Posion St.
[illegible], Ilocos Norte
[illegible] old

Helen R. Deblois
Capilihan St.
Calauag, Naga City
64 years old

Edward C. Petras
Sto. Niño Riverside, Km. 9
Sasa, Davao City
41 years old

Perla G. Llamoso
188 Zone 2, Crossing Patag
Cagayan de Oro City
53 years old

FIFTH PRIZES P100,000

GMA

Sonia B. Crucis
Tomas Cabeles St.
Tabaco, Albay
59 years old

Jacklyn P. Chan
5 Atis Road, Potrero
Malabon, M.M.
31 years old

VISAYAS

Edmar N. Bacas
17 Ortiz Street
Iloilo City
23 years old

Lilia dela Torre
Loctugan, Roxas City
Capiz
68 years old

Rosalie I. del Barrio
San Felipe, Basud
Camarines Norte
22 years old

Virgilio A. Pugay
Vinzon Subd., Cupang
Balanga, Bataan
60 years old

Julio Lorenzo
Feeder Rd. 1, Sto. Tomas
8112 Davao
47 years old

Michael Tiu
116 Bolton, Riverside St.
Davao City
26 years old

SIXTH PRIZES P50,000

GMA

Jimelyn D. Serrano
6 Daang Bakal, Kaliwa
Banaba, San Mateo, Rizal
24 years old

Baltazar M. Cervas
1953 D Juan Luna St.
Tondo, Manila
41 years old

VISAYAS

Russ F. Juatas
Zone 3, San Juan
Molo, Iloilo City
42years old

Franklin P. Carredo
II - Imus St.
Cebu City
23 years old

Felicisima M. Valdez
Brgy. Nicolas
Balayan, Batangas
38 years old

Jason L. Magadia
San Jose, Baao
Camarines Sur
31years old

Marites M. Caputulan
Km. 21 Budbud, Bunawan
Davao City
19 years old

Violeta M. Constantino
Zone-4 Cugman
Cagayan de Oro City
37years old

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MUSHARRAF

US hits Musharraf for taking presidency

WASHINGTON—An infuriated United States Wednesday condemned Pakistan's leader General Pervez Musharraf for claiming the presidency, hours after his foreign minister assured Secretary of State Colin Powell that democracy would soon be restored.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said Islamabad's military government was planning on holding elections next year in a meeting here with Powell on Tuesday, prompting the Secretary of State to say he was "very encouraged."

Yet hours later, Musharraf, who seized power in a coup in 1999 and styled himself as "chief executive," dissolved parliament and was sworn in as president, ousting the previous incumbent Mohammad Rafiq Tarar.

US officials appeared highly irritated and frustrated that Sattar had not tipped them off that changes were imminent in Pakistan.

"We will have to see how to reconcile the events of today with all the pledges we got from yesterday on democracy and elections next year," a senior state department official said.

Sattar dismissed suggestions that he had deceived US officials, telling reporters he had been unaware of Musharraf's plans on Tuesday morning when he met Powell.

"I was informed last evening," he said at a press conference.

Pakistani officials have said Musharraf's move will not set back hopes for elections, but opponents have slammed his decision as a bid to solidify his power base.

Sattar later explained the situation in a previously scheduled meeting with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, which he described as "excellent."

But a senior US official said on condition of anonymity that Armitage had made clear that Washington was "distressed about the surprise announcement of General Musharraf assuming the presidency."

State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher earlier said Washington was "very concerned and very disappointed that Pakistan has taken another turn from democracy," adding that Musharraf's action "severely undermines Pakistan's democratic order." *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Macedonia on the brink

WASHINGTON—Nato Secretary General George Robertson warned Wednesday that Macedonia was "close to civil war," and said that Nato was prepared to launch a disarmament mission potentially involving US troops. Wednesday's collapse of five days of peace talks in Skopje that had sought to thrash out reforms to give the large Albanian minority greater rights, however, served to block a Nato troop deployment mission. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization had said member states would send some 3,000 soldiers to set up collection points for rebel weapons under a partial amnesty proposal—but only if the multi-ethnic government coalition first cut a political deal. Robertson, speaking in Washington ahead of talks with US President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and members of Congress, said his key message to all parties "is to recognize how serious the situation is and how to get an agreement to move forward." "The (national unity) government of Macedonia . . . knows what the stakes are, they know how close to civil war the country is at the present," he told reporters. *AFP*

Iraq: 23 dead in attack

BAGHDAD—Iraq's state-run television claimed Wednesday that a US-British airstrike killed 23 people during a soccer game. US officials blamed a malfunctioning Iraqi anti-aircraft missile. The Iraqi News Agency said allied planes attacked Tall Afar, 440 km northwest of Baghdad, the capital. It did not say when, but said the victims were buried Wednesday. It said 11 other people were injured. US Defense Department officials said Iraqi forces fired several surface-to-air missiles at allied planes on Tuesday and it appeared that part of at least one of the Iraqi missiles malfunctioned and landed in the soccer field. *AP*

Beijing water crisis

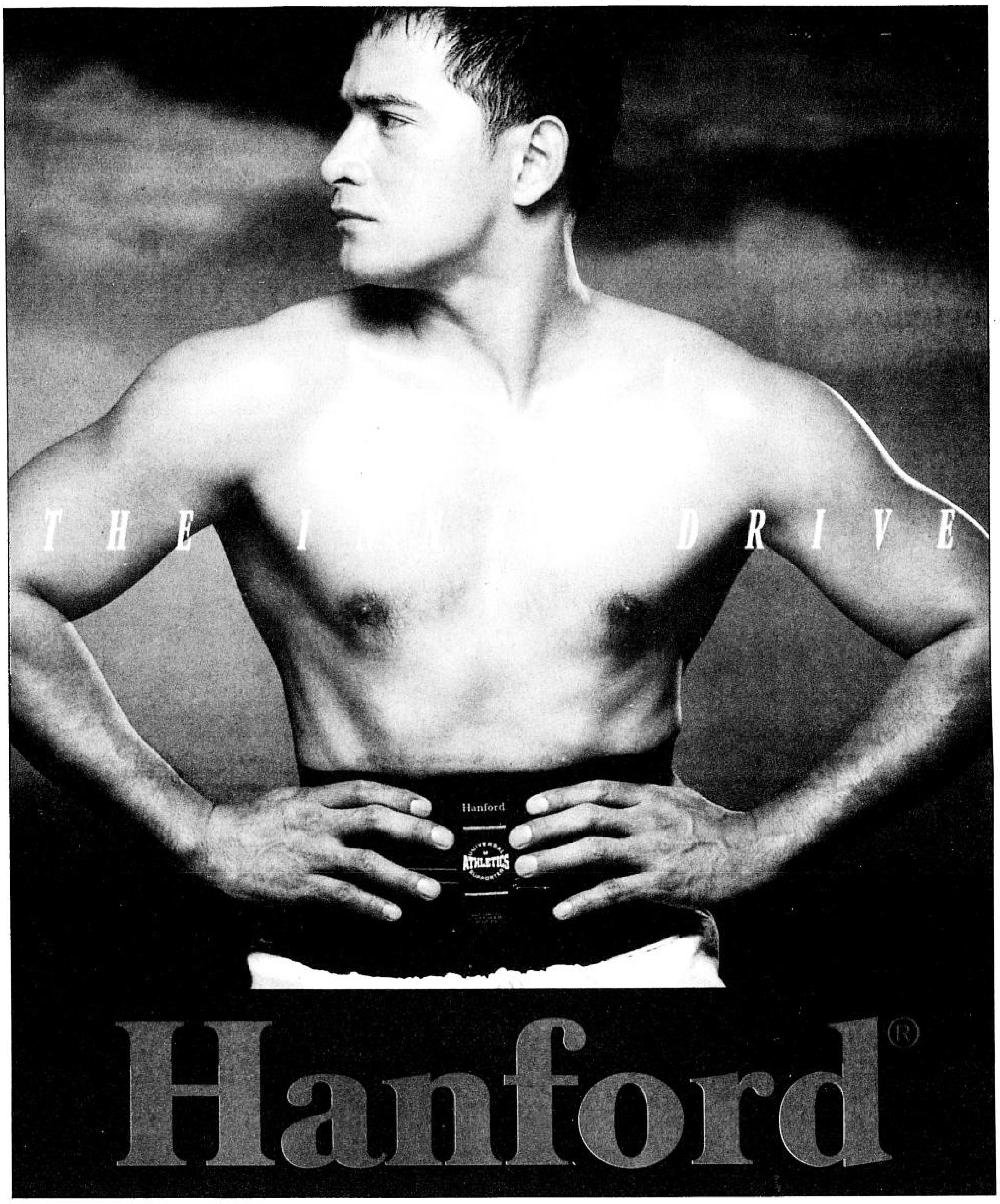
BEIJING—Beijing is to spend nearly $3 billion and hike water rates 200 percent to combat a catastrophic shortage of water in the Chinese capital, an official said yesterday. Vice Minister of Water Resources Zhang Jiyao said $2.9 billion had been earmarked for a total overhaul of water management systems in Beijing and surrounding areas of Hebei and Shanxi provinces. Zhang told reporters economic development, population growth and continuous drought in northern China had contributed to a "serious water shortage." He also said pollution had put one of the two main reservoirs serving the Chinese capital out of action as a drinking water source since 1997, and that groundwater had been overexploited to make up a shortfall. *AFP*

Hit for playing golf

SEOUL—South Korea's opposition called yesterday for the sacking of the defense minister and top military officers for playing golf during a scare over trespassing North Korean ships. Defense Minister Kim Dong-shin and several senior officers were playing golf in Seoul while a security alert was in place over North Korean ships entering South Korean waters. The opposition Grand National Party, the biggest in parliament, called on President Kim Dae-jung to sack the minister and his generals. The protests highlighted a new widespread disapproval of golf, which is considered a luxury sport. "At a time when the Army was placed on alert on June 2 due to the North Korean ships' intrusion, the defense minister and his deputy and chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff continued to play on the golf course. There is no excuse," said GNP spokesperson Kwon Chul-hyun said. *AFP*

Calm returns to Belfast

BELFAST—Calm was returning to Belfast early yesterday after fierce clashes between armed rioters and police firing plastic bullets, in the worst rioting to hit Northern Ireland in recent years, police said. Between 400 and 600 people from both sides of the religious divide were involved in the rioting in north Belfast in which shots were fired and petrol bombs thrown at police officers in riot gear who responded with plastic bullets. *AFP*



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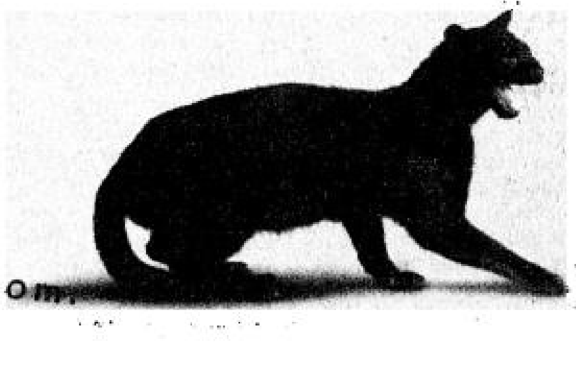

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Pineda sets sights on power co-op

MABALACAT, Pampanga—Suspected gambling lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda is planning to buy Pampanga's biggest electric cooperative but its consumers and workers, backed by a militant labor group, said privatization was not an option even with the recent passage of the Power Reform Act.

Pineda's interest in acquiring the debt-ridden Pampanga Electric Cooperative II (Pelco II) was announced in recent dialogues of the management with the Pelco II Employees Union, according to Myrna Sarmiento, union president.

Pineda is interested in taking control of electric services in Mabalacat and Guagua, two of seven towns served by Pelco II, Sarmiento said, quoting officials.

During the union's negotiations for the renewal of its 1997 collective bargaining agreement, Sarmiento said Lubao Mayor Lilia Pineda, the wife of the alleged jueteng financier, had met them to tell them of her husband's plan to acquire the cooperative.

The acquisition plan by Pineda or by other interested buyers has not been submitted yet because the Power Reform Act gives cooperatives the next three years to initiate the privatization scheme, according to Catalina Saplala, chair of the Consumers Alliance of Pelco II (CAP II).

The alliance has almost 100,000 household-members in Mabalacat, Guagua, Porac, Floridablanca, Sasmuan, Sta. Rita and Lubao, the hometown of the Pinedas and President Macapagal-Arroyo's late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal.

Because privatization was definite after three years, Saplala said CAP II has merged with 18 other electric consumer cooperatives in the region to avert the scheme and to help households avail of cheap electricity.

The merger, now called the Central Luzon Electricity Consumers Cooperative, will act as an entity that will buy electricity direct from the National Power Corp., Saplala said.

Privatization, according to her, cannot effectively counter the widespread corruption and inefficiency in electric cooperatives like Pelco II.

Pelco II's operating losses last year reached P77.595 million, higher by P11.08 million from 1999's net loss of P66.513 million, an audited financial report showed.

The losses were traced to, among other things, unliquidated accounts and electric bills of Pelco II officials and relatives, the report said.

Systems losses, mostly due to pilferage, have gone up to almost 30 percent. Each percentage lost, valued at P700,000, is passed on to consumers, Saplala said.

Pelco II has also billed consumers for unauthorized wage adjustment cost, averaging P100 monthly, which it has not distributed to its nearly 400 workers.

On the side, Pelco II owes the National Electrification Administration P443 million. It also owes the Napocor P57 million monthly and the Angeles Electric Corp. P13 million monthly, reports showed.

According to Saplala, these debts and losses do not justify privatization because consumers have patronage capital contributions.

However, Pelco II management has not set these amounts aside, including dividends in the last 22 years, according to Sarmiento.

Union officials, in a press briefing Thursday, expressed fears of job displacements once the cooperative was privatized.

"Not even Pineda can revive Pelco II," Saplala said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Comelec proclaims Leyte gov

By JANI ARNAIZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

MAASIN CITY—Gov. Rosette Lerias was proclaimed on Wednesday winner of Southern Leyte's gubernatorial race after the Commission on Elections' second division junked an election protest filed by her opponent.

The proclamation was conducted in absentia about 6:20 p.m. inside the Comelec provincial office shortly after lawyer Pureza Galenzoga, poll provincial supervisor and Provincial Board of Canvasser chair, received a copy of the Comelec resolution.

Her two lawyers—Manuel Enage Jr. and Tobby Aguilar—represented her during the proclamation.

Lerias was in Manila when her lawyers received a copy of the Comelec decision, dismissing the election protest lodged by her opponent, former Rep. Roger Mercado, for lack of merit.

The resolution, signed by Comelec Commissioners Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain and Florentino Tuazon, also ordered Galenzoga to immediately proclaim Lerias.

Lerias of the Nationalist People's Coalition was ahead by 1,908 votes with 68,377 votes while Mercado, of Lakas-Bando Saludo, got 66,469 votes.

But her proclamation was stalled after Mercado filed a protest, claiming that Lerias committed fraud through "*dagdag-bawas* (vote-padding and -shaving)" in the towns of Liloan, Hinundayan, St. Bernard, Silago and Sogod.

Mercado also questioned the composition of the PBC after lawyer Fredeswindo Cuizon, PBC secretary, took over as a third member.

Cuizon replaced Alberto Abiera, Commission on Audit provincial head, who inhibited himself because he had a relative among the candidates.

Mercado first filed his protest on May 17 before the PBC but it was dismissed for lack of jurisdiction because the protest was addressed to the Municipal Board of Canvassers. He then elevated his protest to the Comelec in Manila.

In a resolution dated June 19, the Comelec dismissed the protest because the allegation of massive fraud was "unsubstantiated by clear and convincing evidence."

If the allegations were true, the ruling said, these were not valid basis for a pre-proclamation protest.

The resolution cited Section 243 of the Omnibus Election Code that enumerates the basis for pre-election protests.

Mayor orders closure of 450 stalls

ANGELES CITY—The city government on Wednesday ordered the closure of some 450 stalls at the public market here for the failure of their owners to pay their monthly rentals and for allegedly operating without business permits.

Mayor Carmelo Lazatin ordered the city treasurer's office and the police to implement the closure orders on the 450 stalls at the Pampang Public Market at Barangay Pampanga here.

He said the city government has been losing millions of pesos every year due to the failure of stall owners and operators to pay their rentals and to secure business permits.

Most of the stalls are being used to sell dry goods, candies, vegetables, fruits and meat while others are used as canteens and eateries.

But the affected vendors said Lazatin has no right to take away their livelihood.

They said most of the vendors described by the city government as "delinquents" are sub-lessors of the stalls and do not know that the original lessors have not been paying their rentals to the city government.

Some ambulant vendors said that they do not have to pay for stall rental because they only sell their products at the roadsides or near the public market.

Lazatin, however, said all vendors at the public market must either secure business permits or pay rental or do both. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ROGER MARGALLO

DANILO Afalla arrives at the NAIA in a homecoming he dreaded.

Seaman deported to face murder raps

By TJ BURGONIO

SEAMAN Danilo Afalla yesterday expressed no remorse for the murders of his wife and three young children in April and even flatly denied having any hand in these.

The 40-year-old cruise ship mechanic was deported by US immigration authorities two months after he took flight and went into hiding in Miami, Florida. He arrived in Manila from Los Angeles around 6 a.m. aboard Philippine Airlines.

A handcuffed Afalla said while he had heard rumors about his wife's illicit affair with another man, he failed to confirm these and hence, had no reason to kill her and their children.

"I don't know anything about it (killings). I never saw her with another man. It was only my neighbors who said she had been seeing another (man)," he told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport upon his arrival.

"No," Afalla said when asked if the rumors about the extramarital affair drove him to kill his wife Aperacion, 40, and daughter Cheenie Claire, 3; and sons Mark Anthony, 11 and Michael, 5.

Afalla was escorted on PAL flight PR 103 by agents of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the local National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

Looking exhausted from the long-haul flight, Afalla said he believed that a syndicate operating in their hometown in Taytay, Rizal (not Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya as earlier reported) was responsible for the killings.

He claimed he had received death threats from the same group and that was why he immediately flew to the US a day after the decomposing bodies of his wife and children were dug up from a shallow grave near a riverbank in Bayombong on April 18.

Their heads were bashed and their hands tied up when found. Prior to the discovery of the bodies, the Afalla family had told their neighbors that they were driving up to Baguio for an outing.

The NBI, however, said it has strong evidence against Afalla.

"He alone had the motive to kill his family," an NBI agent said.

Infra projects, mining taking heavy toll on Sierra Madre

By BEN MOSES EBREO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The influx of several infrastructure and mining projects in Cagayan Valley has put the Sierra Madre forests in an alarming state because of the continuing depletion of its biodiversity potentials, an official of a conservation group warned.

Dr. Artemio Antolin, Conservation International's coordinator for the Sierra Madre Biodiversity Corridor (SMBC) program, said the government's drastic implementation of various infrastructure projects, including the granting of mining exploration permits to foreign companies in the region, has transformed the remaining forest cover into a "hot spot area."

"The effect of government projects to biodiversity is less given priority, which was worsened by problems regarding the enforcement of environmental laws and the untapped participation of the affected communities at that time," Antolin told reporters during a media consultation of the SMBC here last week.

Threatened

He said the reduction of biodiversity resources of the Sierra Madre started in the early 1950s with the introduction of massive logging activities through the issuance of private timber permits and timber license agreements and the subsequent implementation of selective logging programs until the late 1980s.

He said based on a study, the volume of timber per cubic meter within the Sierra Madre's old growth forest is 70 to 80 cubic meters per hectare but even the construction of a road right of way has affected 100 cubic meters of timber per hectare.

"This means it is no longer road construction, but logging," he said.

He said the uncontrolled tree cutting by logging companies in Cagayan Valley during the administration of strongman Ferdinand Marcos has greatly contributed to the reduction of Sierra Madre's forest cover.

'Kaingin'

The roads built invited several communities to settle and engage in *kaingin* (slash and burn) practices within the forests, he said.

Antolin said the influx of forest settlers has been triggered by population growth in the country aggravated by the lack of alternative livelihood sources among forest migrants.

He said the government's agricultural and industrial development thrusts through the construction of roads and bridges have traversed vital portions of the Sierra Madre forests.

This has resulted in a huge volume of felled trees, that eventually reduced the ecological balance of the Sierra Madre forest designed to support the ecosystem, he said.

Antolin also called on the government "to economically and environmentally evaluate" infrastructure projects especially those affecting the Sierra Madre forests relative to the preservation of the area's biodiversity.

The SMBC, according to officials of the Conservation International, serves as the remaining forest cover in Northeast Luzon and as a major contributor to the remaining 32 percent forest cover in the country.

Balance

"To balance our ecosystem's services to living organisms inside, there should be at least 40 percent forest cover. The scenario is we should go back to our original state in the early 1980s," Antolin said.

The SMBC covers the provinces of Cagayan, northern Aurora, southern Aurora, Quirino, northern Quezon, Isabela and some parts of Nueva Vizcaya.

Conservation International's records show that Cagayan Valley accounts for about 400,000 hectares of old growth and fragmented forests that would sum up to at least 1.6 million hectares under the SMBC.

Antolin also expressed alarm over the growing number of pending mining permits, covering nearly 90 percent of the total land area in the region.

He said mining applications also pose a threat to the SMBC program aimed at focusing protective mechanisms and strategies of the region's remaining forest cover.

He said there is a need to establish hot spot areas for protection, conservation and rehabilitation in the Sierra Madre forests so that their biodiversity can be sustained for future generations.

Woman, 4 kids, niece drown as boat sinks

BACACAY, Albay—A woman, her four children and niece drowned while three others survived when a small boat, locally known as "sibid-sibid," capsized Saturday in the waters off Cagraray Island here.

A police report sent to Chief Supt. Robert Delfin, Bicol police director, identified the dead as Josephine, 35; Analyn, 17; Christopher, 11; Maricris, 9 and Ivy, 7, all surnamed Bertillo, and Fennee Bongadillo, 11.

The survivors were Josephine's husband Pedro Bertillo, 36, and another son Michael, 24, and Brewee Bongadillo, 11.

The report said the Bertillo and Bongadillo families went on an excursion in nearby Buang Beach, about 30 minutes away by boat from the victims' residence in Barangay Cabasan, also in this town.

The victims were on their way home at around noon when strong winds brought by tropical depression "Darna" hurled their boat until it capsized.

Police said only those who knew how to swim survived the tragedy as heavy rains poured on Albay province for almost an hour that day.

The bodies of the victims were recovered by village officials and residents of Buang less than an hour after the boat submerged but six of them were already lifeless, a resident said.

The victim's father said one of the fatalities, Analyn, asked them to go to an outing at a nearby beach before she would go back to Manila where she was working.

He said they left Barangay Cabasan early morning of Saturday and stayed at Buang's Beach until noon.

Bertillo added that they decided to go home when they noticed that the weather was turning bad and thick clouds were massing in the sky.

While they were in a spot in the sea about six feet deep, the boat capsized when strong winds and big waves struck it, the father said.

He said he tried to save his wife and children but to no avail. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cops arrest suspects in dad's killing

PALO, Leyte—Police here arrested on Sunday four suspects, including a minor, in the killing of newly reelected councilor Orlando "Boboy" Cabidog.

In a report to Senior Supt. Nardito Yoro, police director for Eastern Visayas, Supt. Rogelio Montejo, Leyte police provincial director, said the four were seen by witnesses as the ones who broke into Cabidog's house in Barangay Patong, Dagami on June 15.

The suspects were identified as Cesar Pacambi, 28 and his 16-year-old brother; Raul Empillo, 19 and his brother Joma, all residents of Barangay Lourdes, Pastrana.

Joint elements of the Leyte Provincial Police Office and the 80th Provincial Police Mobile Group arrested the suspects while they were eating inside a restaurant in Barangay Patong, in Pastrana.

Montejo said one Garand rifle, a pistol, a shotgun and a .38 cal. pistol were seized from the suspects during the arrest.

The suspects were then brought to the police station in Dagami, 14 kilometers from Pastrana, where they were detained pending the filing of criminal charges. *Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Whale sharks stray into Albay coastal town

LEGAZPI CITY—While whale sharks are tourist attractions in Donsol, Sorsogon, residents of the island town of Rapu-Rapu, Albay, consider them tourists in their place.

"You see, people use to visit these gentle giants in the waters of Donsol, Sorsogon during the months of January to May. But it seems that after that season, the whale sharks themselves become visitors in other coastal areas like here in Rapu-Rapu and very recently in Manito town," said Cris Bananea, a resident of Caracaran, Rapu-Rapu, during an interview at the pier here yesterday.

Donsol town is at the western coast of Sorsogon, while Rapu-Rapu is an island-municipality in the eastern part of Albay province facing the Pacific Ocean.

Bananea said he was able to see the whale shark only Wednesday when some fishermen trapped the fish in their net.

"Maybe the people, especially the fishermen, are already aware that we need to protect this fish . . . that is why they did not poach it," he said.

"We enjoy reading whale shark stories in print and watch the gentle giant animal on TV but now here is one in Rapu-Rapu," Rony Banzuela told the INQUIRER.

Environment officials here came to know about the presence of the whale shark and immediately sounded the alarm over the possibility that the 20-foot-long fish could die of stress and starvation.

It was not known whether it was a female or a male one.

"We have to jump off to the area and facilitate the release of the gentle giant," said Chief Insp. Stanley Arteta of the maritime police in an interview.

But Arteta advised fishermen to release the whale shark as soon as possible.

"They should not procrastinate. It might die of starvation or stress if it stays there for long," he said.

Early this month, a pod of whale sharks visited a coastal village in Manito, Albay.

The 15-foot-long female whale shark and her two offsprings had been trapped for more than a week inside a fish pen in the municipal waters of Barangay Cawayan before environment officials learned about it.

The village is becoming a destination for both residents of Manito and nearby towns.

The interesting fact was that the baby whale sharks, both as big as a man's arm, sometimes went inside their mother's womb and stayed there for a few minutes before going out again and swimming along with their mother.

Engineer Jose Roco, an environment expert from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Office based in this city, said he had organized a team to set the whale sharks free. *Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

2 Manobos slain

COTABATO CITY—About 40 armed men believed to be Moro rebels on Monday killed two Manobo tribesmen and set on fire 15 houses in Carmen and Kabacan, North Cotabato, said Maj. Julieto Ando, local Army spokesperson. He identified the slain tribesmen as Jacinto Mambo and his son Marbonsio, both of Barangay Makabinban. He said the rebels stormed the Makabinban Village, took the villagers' valuables, fled to Barangay Tamped in Kabacan, harassed another Manobo community and set 15 houses on fire. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPAs after mayor

LUCENA CITY—Reelected Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. said he is the next target of communist assassins. Talaga said he was "stunned" when an intelligence report about the threat reached him. Reports said the same NPA unit that assassinated Quezon Rep. Marcial Punzalan Jr. is also the one after Talaga. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cop chief relieved

MATI, Davao Oriental—The provincial police chief has been ordered relieved for alleged partisanship during the May 14 elections. Supt. Jeorge Aquisap was relieved after outgoing Gov. Rosalind Lopez complained to the regional police command that Aquisap supported the candidacy of reelected Rep. Jose Mayo Almario. Lopez's son, Leopoldo VI, ran and lost to Almario in the May 14 elections. Supt. Mechisedeck Bargio, who replaced Aquisap, assumed the post Saturday. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Vendors fight

DUMAGUETE CITY—A former member of the Special Police Action Team suffered multiple stab wounds on Sunday after he was attacked by two of his former SPAT teammates over an old grudge. Doroteo Cabiles, a vendor of Barangay Batinguel identified his attackers as brothers Oscar and Rodrigo Alonto of Cervantes Street, also street vendors. SPO4 Francisco Torres said business rivalry was believed to be the cause of the grudge. SPAT is a voluntary police auxiliary group.

Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

Dengue alert up

KALIBO, Aklan—Local health authorities raised an alert over the possible rise of dengue fever cases in Aklan after two cases were reported in Numancia town. Two pupils were rushed to a hospital in Iloilo after they contracted dengue. Health officials appealed to residents to clean their surroundings and remove all possible breeding grounds of dengue-causing mosquitoes. *Odon Bandiola, PDI Visayas Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern section of Luzon will experience stormy weather. The rest of Bicol region, the rest of Northern Luzon, Central Luzon and Samar provinces will have rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. The rest of the country will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila Hi 30° Lo 24°	**Baguio** Hi 23° Lo 16°	**Tuguegarao** Hi 30° Lo 22°
Laoag Hi 32° Lo 25°	**Clark Zone** Hi 30° Lo 24°	**Tagaytay** Hi 30° Lo 21°
Legazpi Hi 31° Lo 26°	**Bacolod** Hi 31° Lo 24°	**Roxas** Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cebu Hi 30° Lo 24°	**Tacloban** Hi 32° Lo 27°	**Gen. Santos** Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga Hi 32° Lo 25°	**Cagayan de Oro** Hi 29° Lo 22°	**Davao** Hi 29° Lo 24°

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TOURISM BOOST

Boracay gains from Palawan's loss

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The kidnapping of tourists from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan has failed to dampen tourism in Boracay, according to a tourism official.

Edwin Trompeta, Department of Tourism director for Western Visayas, said officials even noticed that many foreign tourists diverted their reservations from resorts in the southern part of the country to the world-renowned island-resort in Aklan.

While he failed to give figures, Trompeta said the transfer of tourists started shortly after Abu Sayyaf bandits raided the high-end resort in Palawan on May 27 and seized 20 hostages, including three Americans.

He said tourist arrivals in the region also increased significantly after the same bandit group raided the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan and took 21 persons, mostly European tourists, to their stronghold on Jolo Island in April last year.

For the first four months of this year alone the number of tourist arrivals was up by 20 percent compared to the same period last year—96,077 to 116,813.

Tourist arrivals in Boracay increased by 26 percent from 181,813 in 1999 to 221,761 in 2000, 70,000 of whom were foreign tourists.

The tourists in the island resort poured in more than P1.7 billion to the local economy last year. It is expected to increase this year in the wake of the Palawan kidnappings.

Trompeta, however, said security measures have been intensified in Boracay, which hosts around 350 beach resorts, and adjoining areas after the Dos Palmas raid.

Among the measures are the installation of observation posts in coastal areas in Antique and areas near the Sulu Sea and Southern Negros.

Army soldiers and police will also serve as blocking forces in case a threat is detected.

Fast crafts of the Coast Guard have also been placed on stand by together with high-speed boats offered by resort owners.

"It is important that we maintain high visibility and alertness," Trompeta said.

FILE PHOTO

DOS Palmas Resort: High-end facility struggling to get back on its feet.

Water rights top issue of Bayan Muna

BAGUIO CITY—Bayan Muna, the Left-wing party-list group, is considering a radical legislative measure for the incoming 12th Congress that will hand back to local governments full control over their water resources.

This came as Cordillera towns confront new power dams and debilitating wars over water in the next 10 years.

Manuel Loste, Bayan Muna Cordillera coordinator, said the measure could become the first volley of bills from the group that seek to finally address issues long abandoned by traditional politicians.

He said activist legislators, for example, are now worried about the ramifications of the recent Electric Power Reform Act on natural resources, given the attraction of hydroelectric facilities to a deregulated power industry.

Bayan Muna garnered more than 6 percent of the votes cast for the party-list groups on May 14, qualifying its three nominees for slots in the 12th Congress.

The party's representatives are Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo, labor leader Crispin Beltran and gender rights activist Lisa Maza.

Loste said Bayan Muna will hold its first national convention next week to line up all these legislative proposals.

But he said natural resource management would become a key platform because of the new government's hard-line economic policies.

"Bayan Muna will, as the name suggests, side with the common man. What is it about the power bill, what is it about globalization policies, which will affect him most? And what can we legislate to ease the problems of the common man? The new power law had neutralized rural electrification and opened a floodgate when it made hydroelectricity a very lucrative industry," Loste said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cops demand probe of rice smuggling

TABACO CITY—The police are asking the Bureau of Customs to look deeper into the alleged smuggling of rice in this city's international seaport.

The request was made after 22,000 bags of suspected smuggled rice were unloaded from the MV Cristina in this city's port.

The vessel left the port immediately after the unloading without being inspected by customs officials.

Chief Insp. Nilo Berdin, city chief of police, said he apprehended a truckload of rice outside the port on orders of Mayor Alex Burce to check if it had papers.

Berdin said Burce had directed him to investigate the reported rice smuggling in this port.

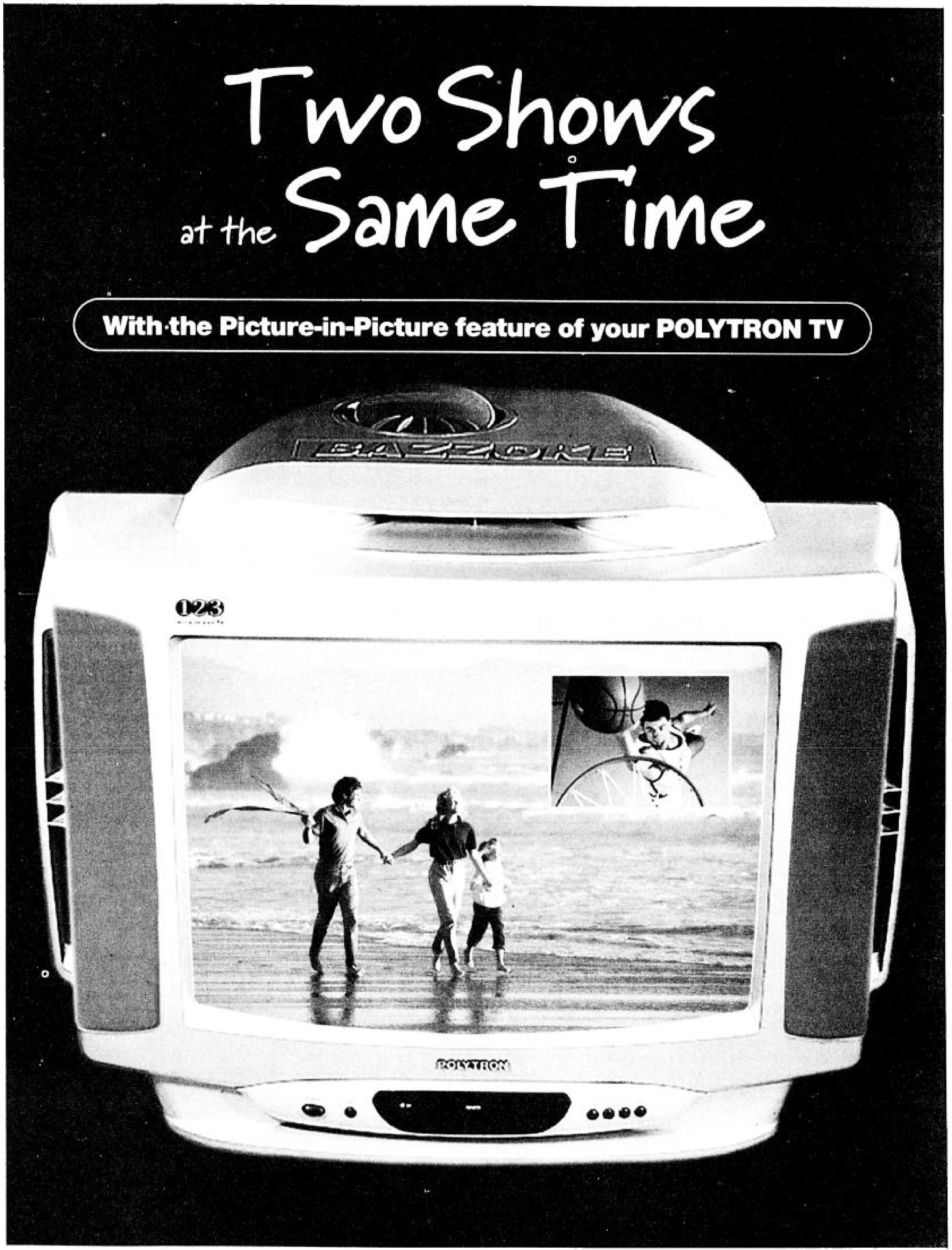
He said a certain Nelson Sales, in-charge of the shipment, showed him a "Notice of Verification" signed by Legazpi City district collector Winston Florin.

Sales, however, refused to show him the shipment's bill of lading, saying it was at the bureau's office, which was closed at that time.

A bill of lading states the point of origin and destination of a shipment.

Berdin released the apprehended truck after an hour, saying he had no jurisdiction over it.

Florin said there is no customs office in this port, making it difficult for officials to inspect arriving cargo. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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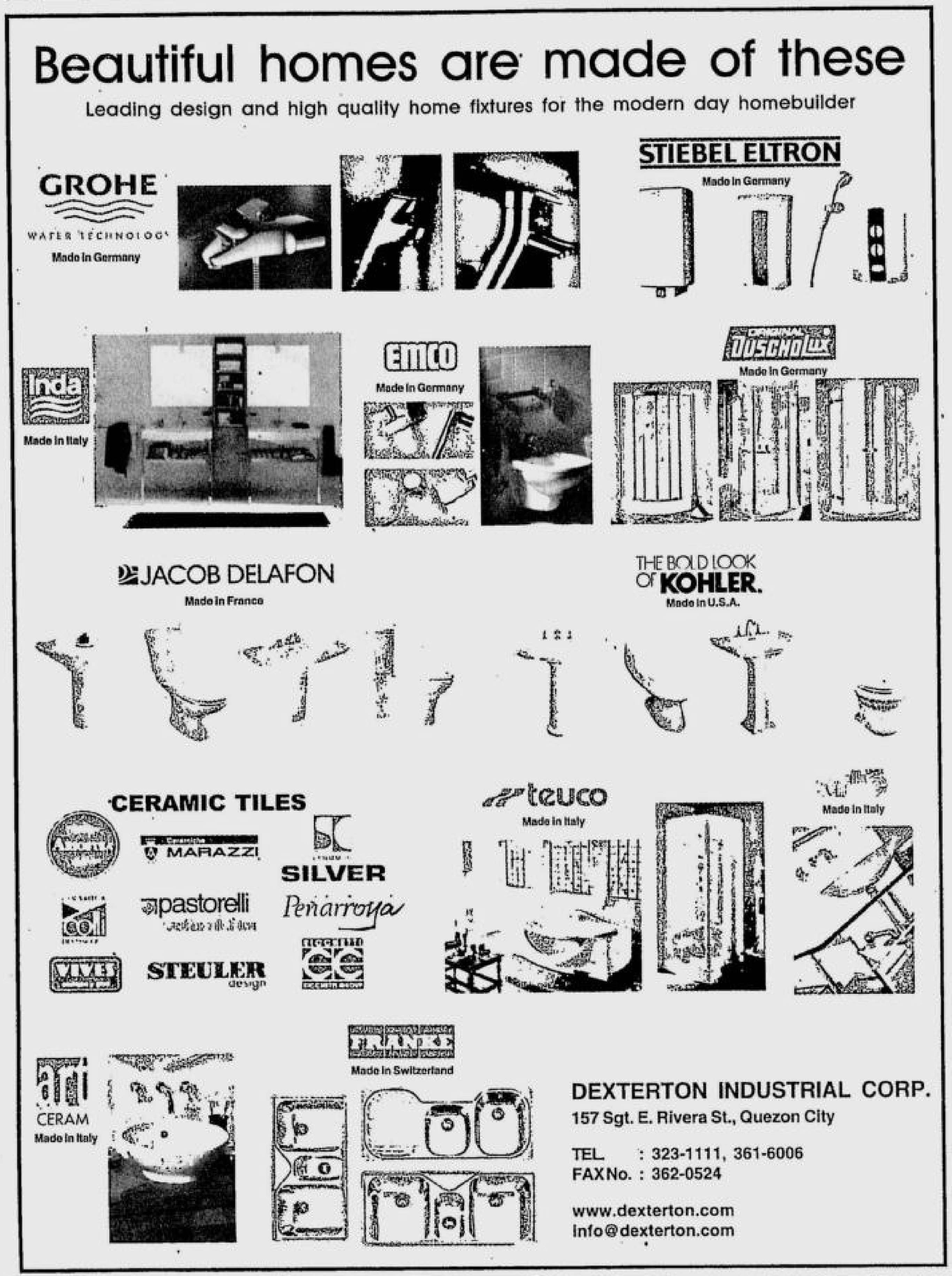
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Missing trader found dead in trunk of car

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CABANATUAN CITY—The frantic search by the police and the family of a missing 21-year-old businessman here since Monday ended with the discovery of his body Tuesday morning in San Rafael, Bulacan.

Ace Glenn Casares, 21, of Barangay Alua in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, died of 19 stab wounds in different parts of the body, police said.

His body was found dumped in the baggage compartment of his Ford Lynx car parked on the Doña Remedios Trinidad Highway in San Rafael.

He was the eldest among three sons of Warlito Casares, municipal assessor of San Isidro, and Gloviminda Miranda-Casares, internal auditor of the Government Service Insurance System in this city.

A fresh college graduate, the young Casares was engaged in retailing pieces of jewelry.

Radio announcer Floy Catabas, a relative of the victim, said the search for Casares started about midnight Monday when the victim's mother called him up informing him that Casares could not be located.

Mrs. Casares said her son informed her several hours earlier that he was about to fetch her from a relative's house and bring her home to San Isidro. But she said her son failed to fetch her and this worried her.

Mrs. Casares and Catabas went to the police to report the disappearance. An alarm was sent to look for Casares or his vehicle.

The alarm was immediately sent to the different police stations in Central Luzon when the police failed to locate Casares' car in the province.

It was about 1 p.m. Tuesday that the San Rafael police informed the police here that Casares' body was found earlier in the morning stuffed in his car trunk along the highway in Barangay Sampaloc in San Rafael, Catabas said.

Reports gathered by the INQUIRER said witnesses saw four young men leaving the crime scene aboard a Toyota Corolla about 11 p.m. Monday.

Casares, who stood 5 feet 11 inches tall, was forced inside his car's trunk.

Reportedly missing from the victim's belongings were a bag containing pieces of jewelry worth P1 million, his wallet, and his cellular phone.

But Casares' wristwatch, a gold necklace, a bracelet and diamond-studded ring worth P350,000, a small bag containing P21,000, were not taken by the suspects.

The San Rafael police recovered a 13-inch kitchen knife believed used by the suspects in stabbing Casares.

Catabas said the victim and his mother, who was waiting for him in a relative's house in a residential subdivision here, last talked with each other by cellular phone at 6:30 p.m. Monday.

The son said he was in a shopping mall in the city and was talking to a prospective jewelry buyer and that he would soon fetch her.

Casares did not identify, though, the prospective buyer, the mother said.

From then on, nothing more was heard from the victim.

But Mrs. Casares said someone used her son's cell phone several times to contact her cell phone. She said the caller did not speak whenever he or she called.

No ransom demand was made to the Casares family, it was learned.

Catabas said in his radio report here that Casares was with him, his mother and other relatives on Monday afternoon in a prosecutor's office here reportedly attending a mediation talk involving some people from Bongabon town regarding a criminal case.

Catabas did not give details about the case but he said the talk ended without any hitch.

Relatives of the victim said they believed the killing was not a simple robbery case. ***With a report from Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Cebuanos assured: No fare hike

CEBU CITY—Cebuanos may heave a sigh of relief for now.

Transport groups in Cebu said they are not keen on asking for a fare increase even if the oil companies jack up fuel prices by 90 centavos.

Leaders of the transport groups, composed of jeepney drivers and operators, said they reached the decision after taking into consideration the huge expenses incurred by parents at the opening of classes and the refusal of employers to increase wages.

They also said they were comfortable with the P4 minimum fare being collected from passengers.

"We assure the public that we will not ask for fare adjustments unless the increase of the price of petroleum products would reach P2 or P3," said Jaime Moncada, Alyansa Nagkahiusang Driber alang sa Reporma (Andar) president and adviser of the Southern Cebu Operators and Drivers Association Inc. (Scodai).

He said everyone, including drivers, would be affected should jeepney fare increase.

Based on previous experiences, Moncada said prices of spare parts and the fees that drivers remit to their operators would usually increase after a fare hike.

Aside from Scodai and Andar, there are three other transport groups that have indicated their plan not to seek a fare adjustment.

These are the Visayas United Drivers Transport Service Cooperative (Vudtrasco), Cooperative Service Cooperative (Citrasco) and the Central Visayas Federation of Transport Service Cooperative (CVFTSC).

These five transport groups represent 95 percent of the transport sector in Metro Cebu.

Nagiel Bañacia, PDI Visayas Bureau

R & R TRAVEL TOURS AND TRANSPORT CORPORATION OPENS TODAY

MESSAGE

My warmest felicitations to the management and staff of **R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation** on their Inauguration Ceremonies.

Your vision for setting the R & R Travel Corporation is surely, with pronounced social concern and commitment firstly for the morale and welfare of the military and police personnel and secondly for the traveling public. For this, I commend you all.

As you start this endeavor, I enjoin you all to be successful players in the tourism industry for it is one that will greatly influence the economic as well as the social development of our country. I have full confidence that your commitment to your vision of growth through excellence will be a meaningful contribution to the attainment of our common goal of nation-building and prosperity in the coming years.

I wish you well and more power. *Mabuhay kayong lahat!*

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Philippines

MESSAGE

My warmest felicitations and congratulations to the Management and Staff of the **R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation** on the occasion of the launching of its operations today.

The establishment of the R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation is indeed a milestone in your corporate quest to provide travel services to the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police whose members and families are eventual beneficiaries of this laudable undertaking. Amidst the sacrifice and heroism of our men in uniform to contain threats to the state, your role therefore, as it affects the morale of the military and police personnel, will definitely contribute to the promotion and well-being of the tourism industry.

As I join you in marking the significance of this occasion, I urge all of you to aspire to render only the best that you can in the interest of tourism in our beloved country.

Congratulations!

RICHARD J. GORDON
Secretary

MESSAGE

I am pleased to greet the Management and Staff of the **R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation** as you mark **R & R's Inauguration Day**. On behalf of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, I wish you nothing but success in this important service venture.

R&R, though merely a "neophyte" in an age-old and long-flourishing travel business, can be considered a trailblazer in its own right. It is the first and only travel agency that caters primarily to the official and personal travel needs of military as well as police personnel, be they for purposes of rest and recreation, or permanent change in station. This should give R & R's personnel every reason to be proud. But more than that, I hope this will inspire you to work with professionalism and dedication in order to ensure that R & R delivers timely, efficient, and economical travel services to its clients.

As I congratulate you on this auspicious day, I thank you in advance for committing yourselves to the enhancement of the morale and welfare of the uniformed services.

Again, my congratulations and best wishes!

DIOMEDIO P. VILLANUEVA
General AFP

MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to the Management and Staff of the **R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation** on the occasion of your formal opening of services to the public.

The Armed Forces and Police General Insurance Corporation has always been our loyal partner in our quest to protect the interest and do service to the ranks of the Philippine National Police. I am certain that the R & R Travel Tours and Transport Corporation, its subsidiary, will now be able to provide the travel service to the police personnel with the same professional and corporate commitment that it has extended to us through the years.

It is with this note that I urge you all to pursue your vision of service, steadfastly, in order to help promote in the enhancement of the well-being and morale and welfare of the PNP.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!

LEANDRO R. MENDOZA
Police Director General
Chief, PNP

The AFPGeneral Insurance Corporation, a company serving the non-life insurance needs of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police will inaugurate its subsidiary, the R & & TRAVEL TOURS AND TRANSPORT CORPORATION on June 22, 2001, 9:00 A.M., AFPGen Building, Colonel Bonny Serrano Road corner EDSA, Quezon City.

The day's activities will be highlighted by a ceremonial ribbon cutting and unveiling of commemorative marker by no less than the Secretary of Tourism, the HONORABLE RICHARD J GORDON, the Guest of Honor and Speaker. He will be assisted by the two leaders of the uniformed institution, GENERAL DIOMEDIO P VILLANUEVA, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and DIRECTOR GENERAL LEANDRO R MENDOZA, Chief of the Philippine National Police. Reverend Father Arnel F Recinto, Parish Priest of Holy Family Parish will officiate the blessing of R & R offices and will deliver the Invocation.

Prominent personalities from the tourism and travel industry as well as officers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police will also grace the affair.

It is expected that Secretary Gordon will challenge the R & R Travel to help make the Philippines an eco-tourism haven that will put the Philippines back in international limelight as a primary destination of tourists.

The occasion will be capped by the signing of Memoranda of Agreement with the Representatives of the AFP and PNP Provident Trust Funds expressing R & R's commitment to share its earnings to its primary clientele, the AFP and PNP.

Among those who will welcome the guests are the members of the Board headed by its chairman, Major General Victor U Garcia, AFP (Ret) who is also the incumbent President of the AFP General Insurance Corporation and Brigadier General Damiano N Yala, AFP (Ret) President of R & R and the incumbent Executive Vice-President and General Manager of AFPGen.

COMPANY PROFILE

R & R is a young but committed travel agency. It was drawn from an inspiration to add more value to services being offered to the AFP and PNP for it to be counted as one of several institutions providing an important service to the aforecited uniformed organizations. The company was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 23, 2001 with an initial capital stock of P5.0M.

The primary intention is to cater, first and foremost, to the official and personal travel needs of the military and police personnel including rest and recreation and permanent change in station. Its doors are also open to serve their family members, friends and the Public-at Large.

The office is located at the Ground Floor of the AFPGen Building along Colonel Bonny Serrano Road corner EDSA Quezon City. Part of the plan is to set-up in-plant offices in major units of both institutions.

SERVICES

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Killing shatters town's 8-year crime-free record

By Cristina Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ADAMS, Ilocos Norte—This tranquil town which lies on the border of Ilocos Norte and Cagayan has been raring for activity as it is perched peacefully between rolling mountains and away from what residents call nauseating growth centers in the lowlands.

Adams, an upland town where power lines are few and far in between, got its wish alright, as it roared with the sights and sounds of new faces unloaded by government vehicles coming from the capital city.

The town may have come to life but the occasion did not call for a celebration.

It had just recorded its first crime incident in a span of almost a decade since the murder of the town's former mayor in 1993.

A group of Sangguniang Kabataan officers led by SK national president Richard Nalupta took the 96-kilometer trip, 14 kilometers of which are steep and rugged uphill terrain, from Laoag City to console the family of their colleague.

On June 15, armed men gunned down Elvenido Ravelo, 25, the town's SK president, whose crusading stance for the environment perhaps brought him more enemies than friends.

Whistle-blower

Before his death, Ravelo blew the whistle on the incumbent mayor's relatives, including her brother, who were allegedly involved in illegal logging.

The suspects—Rudy Dupagen, brother of Mayor Wilma Dupagen, and two cousins—have been charged with Ravelo's murder before the provincial prosecutor's office.

For a small town, it is no surprise that the next household will be a kin or a distant relative.

Ravelo is Mayor Dupagen's nephew while the suspects are his cousins.

With its lush vegetation, Adams could be a gold mine for logging ventures. Most loggers are residents themselves who take to the forest to build their homes until the strict enforcement of environmental laws.

The town, however, has adopted an internal regulation allowing residents to cut down trees only if they use them for small-scale ventures such as to put up their houses.

After all, a typical house in this area is no more than a 100 square meter-lot just enough to pack in at least a family of four and a few household necessities.

Politics

Supt. Romeo Espiritu, Ilocos Norte police director, said they are also looking at politics as another angle in the killing.

Espiritu filed the charges against the suspects on June 19. Witnesses, including the victim's wife, identified the suspects as the persons behind Ravelo's killing.

Ravelo, the mayor's trusted ally and handy man, did not throw his support behind Dupagen during the last elections.

The victim, who would often tag along Mayor Dupagen by acting as her driver in her out-of-town business trips, instead campaigned for defeated candidate Emeterio Ternate.

Almost a decade before, the only other violence recorded was the killing of former Adams Mayor Alfredo Camacam by the town's former chief of police in 1993.

An enraged police chief Mandy Bariga killed Camacam when the latter unseated him and, in the process, installed the mayor's nephew to fill his post.

Zero crime rate

Beyond the twin incidents, the town prides itself with its zero crime rate because neighborhood quarrels (the likes where one-time heroes are born from round table sessions over intoxicating drinks) do not reach beyond the village chief.

Adams (pop.: 1,500), which only has one village, still practices the traditional way of settling differences in the community similar to the *bodong* system in the Cordillera.

Residents are a mix of Ilocanos and the indigenous groups, Apayaos and Igorots, who form a larger fraction of the entire community.

The community's *lupon* (council), composed of *panglakayen* (elderly), probably spends longer hours than the town's police force working on neighborhood differences.

Minor cases of street fights are not brought to the police where they would just end up cramming the blotter sheets. Instead, the *lallakay's* (village elders') guidance is immediately sought, says Bernardo Tawali, chair of the town's sole barangay.

In instances where physical brawls end up with one party being wounded, the *lupon* may decide to sanction the guilty party by determining the value of his wound.

A burst eyebrow could be worth P200 or equivalent to a *dunaig* (a traditional woman's skirt) or a *damili* (earthenware).

Where a victim ends up dead, the elders may award the family up to three heads of carabao as indemnity.

But as Tawali would later recount, the recent disorder was something that not even the village elders could have prevented.

"We had a foreboding of Ravelo's death because he had been telling me and his parents about the threats on his life," Tawali said.

But while the police have already identified the suspects, relatives of Ravelo, a young politician who dreamed of becoming the next town mayor someday, say they have a long list of people who could have held grudges against him.

For one, Ravelo and his brother took different roads in their choice for a mayor.

Ravelo has become Dupagen's critic while his brother has a high regard for the incumbent mayor.

But Tawali said Ravelo's differences with his brother had long been ironed out with the intercession of the village elders.

Ceasefire with ex-NPAs declared

BACOLOD CITY—The military in Negros Occidental declared a ceasefire with the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade starting yesterday.

The cessation of military offensive was in compliance with the guidelines issued by retired general Eduardo Ermita, presidential adviser on the peace process, to strengthen the ongoing peace effort with the breakaway movement.

Carapali Lualhati, RPA-ABB national commander, said he welcomed the ceasefire and the issuance of the guidelines.

The RPA-ABB had offered a ceasefire as a confidence-building measure following the signing of a peace agreement between the Estrada administration and leaders of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas (RPM-P) on Dec. 10, 2000.

But the peace agreement is still being reviewed by a committee headed by Ermita, which President Macapagal-Arroyo formed shortly after she was installed President in January.

Col. Alphonsus Crucero, the Army's 303rd Infantry Brigade commander, said they have stopped offensives against the RPA-ABB after receiving a copy of the guidelines from Ermita.

But he said operations against the mainstream New People's Army in Negros will continue.

Ermita issued the guidelines on Wednesday to avert the collapse of peace efforts with the RPA-ABB, following the death of three rebels in two encounters with Army soldiers in La Castellana town and in Silay City last week.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

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Casino men want jobs back

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—Former workers of the Mimosa Regency Casino here are asking the Clark Development Corp. to reinstate them when the casino re-opens by the end of this month.

In a manifesto submitted to CDC president Emmanuel Angeles Tuesday, some 100 former Regency Casino employees said the CDC and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) are "legally and morally" obliged to rehire the hundreds of displaced workers of the casino.

The state-owned CDC and Pagcor closed the Regency Casino in December 1998 after its operator, the Mondragon Leisure and Resorts Corp., failed to settle its more than P400 million rental and franchise obligations to them.

The former workers said the CDC had promised that they would be reinstated to their jobs should the Regency Casino re-open. They said they have been waiting for three years now to return to their jobs. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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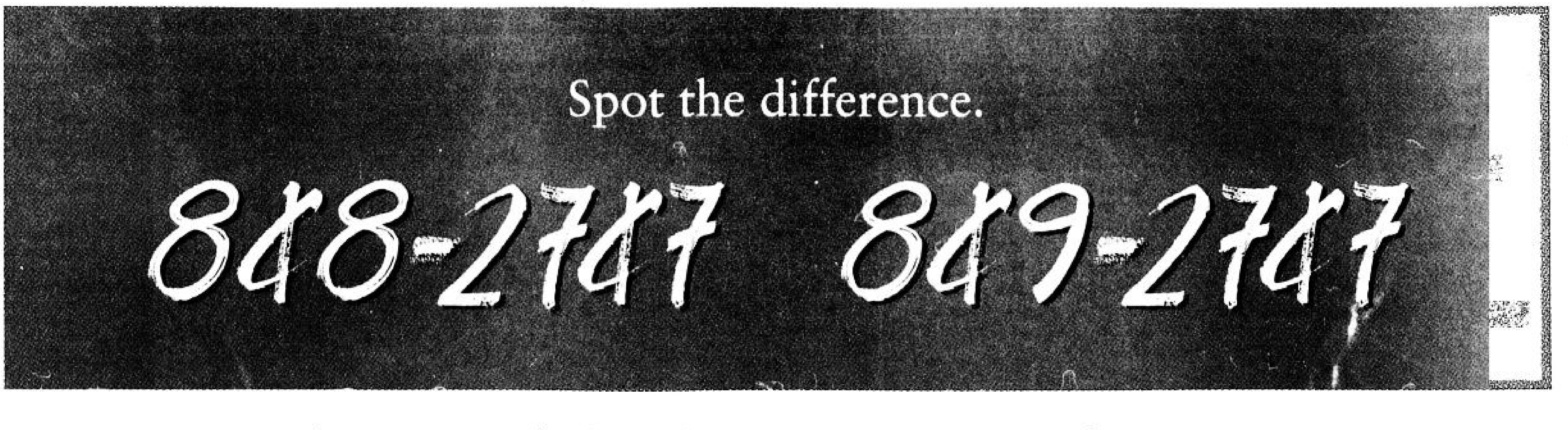

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GMA says sorry to kidnap victim

(From page A1)

Macapagal cited two reasons she revealed the report of a destabilization plot against the government.

"First, there is a discernible pattern in all these crimes, even in text messages about crimes that did not happen. They seem to have been planned and executed for maximum media effect. The obvious reason is to destabilize the government," she said.

"Second, I want to be transparent. The public, to my mind, has a right to know all information that affects the stability of the country.

"My aim is to assure them that I know what is happening and that concerned government agencies are taking the appropriate steps."

Ms Macapagal pointed out that she did not name names. "While the political opposition has all the right to deny complicity, it is not true that I am looking for scapegoats," she said.

Ms Macapagal said she was assuming full responsibility for whatever happens in the country.

"The buck stops with me. Let me assure the country that the government is in full control. No destabilization plot will succeed," she said.

The President came under fire for her statement that the kidnapping of Rosagas and other abductions in Metro Manila were part of "a sinister plot."

Members of the Cheng family disclosed in television and radio interviews that the kidnapping was not a hoax as they paid P10 million in ransom to the kidnappers.

The Central Police District also said the case was "a plain and simple kidnapping."

Three men wearing police uniforms and armed with Armalite rifles seized Rosagas, her driver and bodyguard at gunpoint around 7:30 a.m. on Monday while she was on the way to the Uratex office in Project 7, Quezon City.

The three gunmen in a white Mitsubishi Adventure van blocked the red Mercedes Benz sedan of Rosagas. A blue Toyota Corolla car pulled over behind the sedan in front of the College of Law at the University of the Philippine campus in Diliman.

CPD investigators later said Rosagas and her two companions were freed shortly before midnight after the ransom money was delivered in Laguna. The kidnappers then told Rosagas and her companions to board a bus to Cubao, Quezon City.

Rosagas reportedly showed up at her family's residence in plush Ayala Heights about 1 a.m. Tuesday.

Senator-elect Panfilo Lacson also scoffed at insinuations that he was involved in the kidnapping of Rosagas.

Lacson, the Philippine National Police chief under ousted leader Joseph Estrada, said Ms Macapagal was fed "contaminated and rubbish intelligence reports."

He voiced suspicions that his longtime enemy, PNP intelligence chief Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, and Armed Forces intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus were the sources of the "false" information.

Other opposition senators also described as irresponsible and baseless Ms Macapagal's statement blaming one of them for the recent spree of kidnappings.

Government officials and analysts say the resurgence of kidnappings in the country is taking a heavy toll on the economy, particularly the peso, stock market and foreign investment.

Sen. Loren Legarda said leaders of the Chinese-Filipino community told her that at least 47 of its members had been kidnapped this year.

At least four Singaporean businessmen have also been abducted in Metro Manila the past three months.

The British Embassy in Manila earlier said in a travel advisory that three Britons had been kidnapped this year.

Jinggoy: I paid the price for a hug

ESTRADA

(From page A1)

"For these flagrant violations, done on the very first hours of the first day, the permission granted him by the court to stay in his house (at night) has to be revoked outright," the ruling read.

The mayor's paperwork "can still be very well attained without necessarily committing these violations," the court's third division said.

In essence, the resolution granted the state prosecutor's June 19 motion asking the court to limit Jinggoy's detention leave to office hours.

The politician has until June 23 to wrap up his unfinished business at the municipal hall. With the new order, he can attend to official matters only during office hours, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In the original June 18 ruling granting him what was tantamount to temporary house arrest, Jinggoy was allowed to stay overnight at his residence in North Greenhills.

No permission

Reading from a four-page resolution, division chair and Associate Justice Anacleto Badoy said Jinggoy should have asked the court's permission before visiting his grandmother and laying a wreath at a shrine near his office to mark Rizal's 114th birth anniversary.

"Conditions imposed by the court are never meant to be trifled with—else they are better not imposed at all," Badoy said at a 4:30 p.m. press briefing.

Badoy said the court confirmed the violations through Jinggoy's interview with the GMA-7 news program "Frontpage," where he talked about the two unauthorized visits.

Badoy, who penned the resolution, wrote: "There can be no doubt, the National Hero (Rizal) himself would not be very happy with a visit (to his monument) that at the same time constituted a flagrant violation of some strict and explicit condition of the Court."

More time, please

Earlier in the day, Jinggoy's lawyers even asked the court to grant him 10 more days to finish and turn over his official business to his successor, half-brother JV Ejercito.

Their "urgent motion for additional time" claimed that their client had to personally oversee an "inventory of finished and unfinished projects. . . as well as an accounting of funds."

The task, they said, would require Jinggoy to have "conferences with contractors" and bankers.

"He (cannot) not imagine how he (can) completely and competently attend to these matters and properly clear his accounts within a matter of five days," the motion said, adding that banking transactions such as the clearing of checks normally take up to three days.

A private prosecutor continued to protest the order allowing Jinggoy to work at his office. Arno Sanidad said the arrangement was an "insult" to San Juan vice mayor and former professional cager Philip Cezar, who is authorized to take over town hall affairs in the mayor's absence.

Ani eyes Crame

As the trial of the Estradas draws closer, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said he would propose Camp Crame as an alternative detention site for the accused pair.

Even though the Estradas were transferred from Camp Crame after their arrest due to perceived substandard conditions of the jail there, Desierto said the camp fitted the requirements set by the court as a detention venue.

He also noted its proximity to the Sandiganbayan. Both are in Quezon City, while the detention facility specially built to house the Estradas is in Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Desierto's plan came on the heels of another court order allowing the Estradas to remain detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) "until further orders," despite an earlier resolution to transfer them back to Fort Sto. Domingo.

At the height of Edsa III, police moved the Estradas from their cell at the former Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force building amid security concerns that Estrada supporters would try to storm the camp.

The other day, Desierto said he would ask the court to order the return of father and son to their detention center in Sta. Rosa after scheduled hearings in the Sandiganbayan finish on the 28th.

The Estradas are supposed to attend bail hearings of lawyer Edward Serapio, a co-accused in their plunder case, from June 25-28, while their actual arraignment for plunder is scheduled on the 27th.

Delaying tactics

The Ombudsman also said he was bracing himself for more delaying tactics from the deposed President's lawyers as the arraignment draws closer.

Desierto and other government prosecutors were set to oppose a motion to quash the plunder charge filed by Estrada's lawyers yesterday afternoon.

He said he expected the defense lawyers to raise other issues but expressed confidence that the Sandiganbayan would treat such motions as mere tactics to delay the trial.

The Ombudsman complained that the arraignment of the Estradas had been delayed for more than a month despite the Speedy Trial Act, which specifies "that the arraignment should be held within 30 days from the date that the accused has been placed in the jurisdiction of the court."

At a breakfast forum, Desierto again rejected references to the Estradas' continued stay at the VMMC as "hospital arrest." He said that the word to use is "confinement."

'Step backward'

But militant groups raised fears that the court decision granting what they insisted was "hospital arrest" could foreshadow a favorable ruling for the Estradas in their plunder case.

Describing the development as "a step backward" from the graft court's earlier decision to scrap the Estradas' bid for house arrest, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan yesterday said it would not be surprised if the court eventually overturns its earlier decision.

"The granting of hospital arrest shows the Estrada camp's capacity to throw its weight around and the (Macapagal) camp's readiness for compromises on special privileges to Estrada," said Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño.

Militant group Sanlakas blamed President Macapagal-Arroyo for the graft court's decision, saying that the special treatment enjoyed by the discredited leader and his son was a result of the President's pro-house arrest stance.

Plunder Watch convenor Carol Araullo called the hospital-stay order "a setback in the sense that the court's earlier resolution rejecting house arrest was a right decision."

Bishops for hospital stay

On the other hand, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines supported the Sandiganbayan's decision, saying that Estrada's health apparently warranted close medical observation.

Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, president of the CBCP, said that he did not approve of house arrest for the ousted leader, but added that hospital confinement might be justifiable.

"Compassion does not mean releasing him or pardoning him but simply giving him that proper humane treatment as befits his dignity as former President," Quevedo said.

"If medical doctors impartially judge that his health requires detention at a hospital, then let it be so," he said.

VMMC doctors had deemed Estrada physically fit to travel, but had added it would be best to keep him at the hospital.

Quevedo believes that the detention house in Sta. Rosa is an appropriate place to hold the deposed leader. He even suggested that improvements be made, such as placing curtains on the windows to give the Estradas some privacy.

"It's not because he is Estrada but because he is the former President. There are certain civilities that need to be accorded a former head of state, especially since he has yet to be proven guilty," said the archbishop.

That annex again

Malacañang, for its part, said that although building a hospital annex to detain the Estradas remained an option, the government wanted to make do with the existing hospital wing, though with additional security.

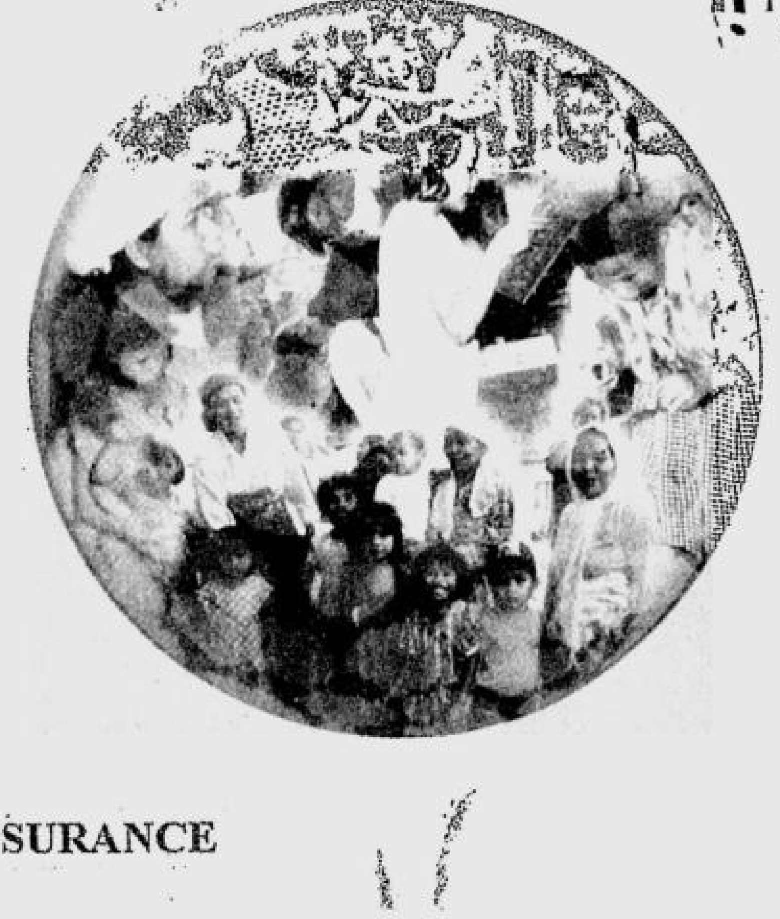
Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said that since the "political temperature has cooled down," there were fewer security concerns about detaining the former President and his son in the hospital suite they have been occupying since the May elections.

President Macapagal aborted the project to build a new wing in late May due to a public outcry.

Tiglao repeated that police and military officials were evaluating whether there was any need to construct a new wing.

"When that annex thing was brought up . . . the political temperature was quite high . . . When that is the case, of course the military and the police are extra careful. Now it seems to have cooled down, so perhaps the existing wing would be enough," Tiglao said.

He said all that had to be done was to expand the military security detail, since the wing stood beside a tall structure where snipers can hide. *With reports from Norman Bordadora and Juliet L. Javellana; AFP*



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ARMY troopers on their way to Tuburan and a possible showdown with Abu Sayyaf bandits. DENNIS SABANGAN

Priest says gov't ransomed him for ₱2M

(From page A1)

Muslim woman or converting to Islam.

"I (was also required) to provide them regular support (in the form of) rice, other goods and money, and the nuns and priests with me (were told to) also extend support to the Abu Sayyaf," he said. "All of these conditions were not met."

In Manila, the spokesperson of the Armed Forces said the military had temporarily given up the search for the remains of American hostage Guillermo Sobero.

"We are busy in the search for the living hostages and leave it in the meantime to the local officials and our other informants to help locate the body," Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said.

Sobero, 40, was supposedly beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf as an "Independence Day gift" to President Macapagal-Arroyo, as announced by its spokesperson Abu Sabaya on June 12.

Sobero is now presumed dead although his corpse has yet to be found.

Adan said only persons involved in Sobero's burial could supply information on the location of his remains.

From California, Sobero's sister Ana made an emotional appeal yesterday over Radio Mindanao Network, urging his captors to have mercy on him and his children.

"If he's alive, don't hurt him," she said over the station based in Zamboanga City. "He's a family man and he has four children who are crying for his return. If he's already dead . . . please give us information on where his remains are . . . because my family would like to give them a proper burial here at home, where he belongs."

Ransom

The Macapagal administration has repeatedly stressed its no-ransom policy.

But Nacorda said he did not believe that no ransom was paid to the Abu Sayyaf for the release of a number of hostages taken from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on May 27.

"*Pera-pera lang yan* (It's just a matter of money). These bandits are after the money," he said.

Nacorda said he had received reports that the bandits were demanding money for the release of the four local residents seized by the bandits from the Jose Torres Memorial Hospital during the June 2 siege of Lamitan.

He also cited reports that a wealthy politician had offered to provide P500,000 for the release of Ediborah Yap, Reina Malonzo, Joel Guillo and Sheila Tabunyag.

But Malonzo's mother Tarcila denied having received a ransom demand from her kidnappers.

"We have no contact with them, not even a letter from my child," Tarcila said in Filipino.

Malonzo's father Raul said no official had met with the family to give the assurance that the government was doing its best to secure the safe release of the hostages.

He pointed out that the hostages who could afford to pay millions of pesos in ransom to the Abu Sayyaf had been freed one after the other, and that the government should also work for the release of the others.

"We have no money. Where would we get ransom?" Agence France Presse quoted Tarcila as saying. "We can see the trend. Little by little, they free the hostages. We suspect there must be ransom paid. What about the poor ones who can't pay ransom?"

Daniel Cawley, medical director of the Lamitan hospital, said the donated medicines delivered by the President during a visit early this week were either expired or just weeks from expiring.

Cawley said that while P105,539 worth of medical aid had been delivered, a breakdown of the items showed that some were grossly overpriced.

For example, he said, plasters commercially available for P50 were listed as being worth P300.

Militia

Nacorda called on the government to beef up the militia forces in Lamitan, saying the four companies of militiamen were not enough to secure the town from the Abu Sayyaf.

Ms Macapagal had earlier said that key population areas in Basilan had been secured through community defense forces. But Nacorda said half of the militia forces were still being organized.

He said the majority of the Lamitan residents had "more confidence" in the militiamen than in the military.

"(The soldiers) cannot be everywhere at any time. They are only in a particular place. (The militia forces) are in the community 24 hours," he said.

The priest noted the seeming lull in the military operations.

"I'm just wondering, it's like there's a time-out," he said. "There should be no time-out."

To criticisms of the military, Adan had this to say: "Our troops are moving night and day, climbing mountains, crossing rivers."

He denied that there was a lull in military operations, although he conceded that since Saturday, there had been no armed clashes with the Abu Sayyaf despite the deployment of eight battalions in Basilan.

"But we have not slowed down a bit," he said. "In fact, we are intensifying operations."

Adan maintained that the military was "not aware of any payoffs or ransom made to the Abu Sayyaf."

He said that while the government had authorized negotiations, these were intended only for the unconditional release of the hostages.

"As pronounced by our Commander in Chief, there will be no stop to military operations until the Abu Sayyaf is decimated," he said.

Adan said the military was bracing for possible reinforcements from the bandits operating outside Basilan.

"We have intensified our sea and land patrols in Jolo, Basilan and Zamboanga City in anticipation of Abu Sayyaf reinforcements," he said.

He noted that the problem was being compounded by the presence in Basilan of armed groups said to be aiding the Abu Sayyaf.

The Associated Press quoted Adan as saying that the troops were "not too far" from the bandits.

"We expect to make contact with the enemy anytime," he said.

Severed heads

Col. Danilo Servando, spokesperson of the AFP Southern Command, said last night that three severed heads were found in Tuburan town yesterday.

He said the heads were in a state of decomposition and were in the custody of Task Force Lightning under Col. Pedro Cesar Raboanga.

In Zamboanga, Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, commander of Joint Task Force Comet, cited reports that one of the heads belonged to a Sergeant Sulatan, who was killed on June 4 in Upper Sinangkapan in Tuburan.

Sulatan was with the 55th Infantry Battalion.

Abu Sabaya had earlier said over RMN that his group had beheaded three soldiers in Sinangkapan.

On June 12, he said they had dumped the body of the hostage Sobero by a roadside in Tuburan. He taunted the military to find it "before stray dogs get to it."

Agence France Presse also reported that government troops gunned down an Abu Sayyaf bandit after he wounded a soldier in an escape attempt.

It quoted Servando as saying that Nuramun Asamun was arrested Tuesday in Sinangkapan where he was buying medical supplies from a pharmacy.

Servando said Asamun resisted arrest, grabbed a soldier's service pistol and wounded him in the leg.

Asamun was shot dead while fleeing, Servando said, adding that bottles of hydrogen peroxide and antibiotic tablets were recovered from him.

The military said three suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits were captured on Monday in Basilan and were undergoing interrogation.

On Wednesday, 25 members of the Moro National Liberation Front on board two pump boats were intercepted at the coastline of Tabuk in the capital Isabela on suspicions that they were bandits.

The 25 men, all unarmed, were eventually released after questioning.

"They were earlier reported to be Abu Sayyaf bandits, and this confirms our earlier statement that various armed groups in Basilan are complicating our operations," Adan said.

Red Cross

In Davao City, the International Committee on the Red Cross (ICRC) said it had wanted to enter Basilan to help civilians caught in the crossfire.

However, it said, it chose to stay away because there were no security guarantees from the government and the Abu Sayyaf.

David Borja, the ICRC delegate for Mindanao, said the humanitarian organization could serve as "neutral intermediary" for the release of the hostages if the government and the Abu Sayyaf agreed to it.

"But there is no request from either side," Borja said.

"For now I don't see myself going . . . if everybody is already there. Definitely we have no contacts, too, with the Abu Sayyaf."

Borja said ICRC volunteers were ready to help the civilians if their security were guaranteed.

"This situation is not a given in Basilan," he noted.

ICRC field officer Roberto Palo said the organization was taking a hands-off stance toward incidents of kidnapping or hostage taking, unless these involved prisoners of war.

"There is nothing to negotiate . . . Red Cross (volunteers) are not immune from bullets and atrocities," Palo said. ***With reports from Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Inquirer wires***

Lawyer wants PlayStation for Erap

(From page A1)

he would maintain that he had kept track of current events only through the media.

The former President denied allegations that he still maintained a well-oiled intelligence network through his political allies. "That would cost me much," he said.

Estrada's health has visibly improved since the INQUIRER interviewed him on May 6. At that time he and his co-accused son Jinggoy were held at their official detention center, a newly built, modestly furnished bungalow inside Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

He talked about having a treadmill installed in the spacious, air-conditioned "presidential suite" he was sharing with Jinggoy in the military hospital. But he denied reports that he had been allowed to jog around the hospital compound.

During the interview, he did not run out of his famous "Eraptions," or Erap jokes.

Jail him anywhere, but he thinks he still has a good shot at the "presidency." The presidency of the Senate Spouses Foundation (SSF), that is.

"I'm still running for president. And this time I can be up against Vilma (Santos) and Sharon (Cuneta), you know," he said snickering, referring to the movie star wives of Senators-elect Ralph Recto and Francis Pangilinan.

His wife, former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, was among the four pro-Estrada candidates who won in the May 14 senatorial election.

Traditionally though, the SSF presidency is given to the spouse of the Senate President, a position Ejercito cannot possibly get elected to as a neophyte senator.

Still, the ousted President chuckled when further humored about the prospect of being "cheated" in the SSF presidential race.

He had earlier coined the phrase "housewife arrest" when, days after his ouster, he found himself forced into a very domesticated life with Ejercito at their San Juan mansion.

And it appears that Estrada can really afford to play jester some more to guests at the VMMC, after the Sandiganbayan on Wednesday allowed him and Jinggoy to remain indefinitely at the military hospital until further notice.

The court ruling was roundly criticized by anti-Estrada quarters which backed up the People Power II revolt that kicked him out of Malacañang on Jan. 23. The ruling has fueled speculations that the Macapagal administration has grown "soft" on the Estradas, who are facing graft and plunder charges.

The Sandiganbayan's 3rd Division based its ruling on the latest medical advisory from the VMMC that says that the former President has pulmonary disease and that Jinggoy needs to undergo more cardiac tests at the Makati Medical Center.

On Monday, the anti-graft court granted Jinggoy a five-day temporary liberty to allow him to "clear his desk" and finish unfinished business at the municipal hall as the outgoing mayor of San Juan.

Grilled gindara

For the late-evening interview, he served oysters, Japanese food, grilled *gindara* and shrimps.

Estrada, known for his fine taste in home furnishings, said he had deliberately kept the suite as it was when he arrived, lest he be "accused again" of living in luxury while in detention.

The receiving area has a big oil painting, but curiously it was left lying on the floor, with nobody bothering to mount it back on the wall. For tablecloth, the suite has the standard white cloth bearing a big VMMC official seal.

Sounding like someone ready to write his memoirs, Estrada told the INQUIRER of his litany of complaints—much of it off-the-record. He said that as part of his legal defense at the Sandiganbayan he would speak about the "conspiracy" that undermined his leadership and led to his downfall.

Estrada was still in a mood to reminisce about his presidency up to 2 a.m. on Wednesday. After the interview, he still had two more guests to entertain, former classmates who took part in "Edsa Tres."

Letters from the edge . . .

(From page A1)

pino, "We only seek one common agenda, that is peace."

Hector said he did not expect anything in return should the government accept his offer to "mediate" for the release of the remaining hostages.

When the ASG was still holding American hostage, Jeffrey Schilling during the first months of the Macapagal administration, Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya threatened to behead the American.

Hector aired an appeal over radio against the killing of Schilling. Schilling was later rescued by the joint operatives of the Philippine National Police and the Marines in Patikul, Sulu.

"Greetings of peace," began Khadaffy's letter which Malacañang released yesterday six days after it was handed to President Macapagal by freed hostage Francis Ganzon.

"As a gesture of goodwill, we are releasing unconditionally two (2) captives taken from Palawan, namely: Atty. Francis Ganzon and Kimberly Uy . . ." the letter read. It also asked for two mediators to resolve the crisis "the soonest possible time."

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao noted the use of the term mediator in Khadaffy's letter dated June 14. It was a significant point indicating the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) has no intention of demanding ransom as a way of ending the crisis, Tiglao interpreted.

"Negotiators (would mean) negotiations for ransom. Mediation simply means mediation to end the conflict," Tiglao said in a news briefing where he distributed copies of the letter.

He also said that the letter indicated "the ASG itself wants the crisis to be resolved which has been interpreted by the military as meaning they are feeling now (the pressure and that) the military operations are taking effect."

On the other hand, Hector in a taped interview with the INQUIRER said that if the government continues with its military operations, the Abu Sayyaf are ready to fight anytime "because they are not afraid to die."

But if government will agree to talks with the ASG, Hector said, he is certain tensions in Mindanao will dissipate.

In Filipino, Hector wrote: "The government talks to the NPA and the MILF, both groups do not leave any lasting damage to the nation, so why can they not talk with a group that has caused severe damage to the country?"

Hector was arrested last December with another Abu Sayyaf member identified as Habib while the two were trying to sell a video footage of American hostage, Jeffrey Schilling, for $25,000.

Police who arrested Hector said he was in possession of 200 grams of shabu. But he denied selling drugs. He was in Manila just to sell the tape, he said. He has been in jail since as possession of 200 grams of shabu is a non-bailable offense.

Indicators...

Tiglao pointed out that Khadaffy's letter indicated that he's is still very much alive contrary to reports that he was killed in a military encounter early last month.

But reporters found two blank spaces in a paragraph of the photocopied letter. Tiglao explained that Malacañang erased the names of two government mediators proposed by the Abu Sayyaf leader.

Tiglao said the government did not want the proposed mediators identified because it was sticking to its authorized negotiator who is using the name William Castillo.

In his earlier statement to the media, Abu Sabaya expressed the group's willingness to negotiate with the government and in fact named two Malaysian officials as possible negotiators.

But the palace stood by its no ransom, no negotiation policy saying the military option will go on in full force.

War not solution

Hector acknowledged that the problem in Mindanao cannot be solved without the help of the President.

He stressed in the second paragraph that "war is not the solution" to the Mindanao problem.

The handwritten letter of Khadaffy bore a signature on top of Janjalani's name, was addressed to no one and had a globe-like logo on the upper left.

The full text of Khadaffy's letter follows: "Greetings of peace. This action should not be taken as a sign of weakness on our part but was solely made as a gift to the possible coming of ____. and _____ as mediators in the resolution of the Palawan and Lamitan hostage crisis."

"We expect that the Philippine government will react positively so that this crisis will be over with in the soonest possible time," it said.

"Mention should be made to the brave men and women of Radyo Agong, Radio Mindanao Network for their unbiased reporting and their unnoticed efforts to help solve the present crisis," it said.

'Oxygen of publicity'

Tiglao said one of the significant points about the letter was the Abu Sayyaf's commendation of RMN.

Malacañang had disapproved of RMN's decision to air the interviews of Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya despite the President's appeal for a news blackout on the bandits. Quoting former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the President said one way of defeating terrorism was to deprive it of the "oxygen of publicity."

"That's one interpretation of the analysts," Tiglao said of the letter showing Janjalani is still alive.

But Tiglao said it seemed that two Abu Sayyaf leaders were making different requests because Sabaya had made another demand through RMN the other day.

Asked why Malacañang released the letter belatedly, Tiglao said: "To give you as much information as we can."

Officer hints . . .

(From page A1)

driver last November.

Dumlao signed the nine-page handwritten affidavit on June 12 and submitted it two days later to the Department of Justice through chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño.

Dumlao, who was arrested on June 4, said that the plot to kill Dacer started in January 1999 and that the task was first assigned to him by Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, a trusted lieutenant of Lacson.

Dumlao, former deputy chief for operation of PAOCTF-Luzon, said the plot started with a simple surveillance of Dacer's PR office inside the Manila Hotel in Intramuros, Manila. Later, it turned into a complicated plan of "burning or bombing" the office to destroy vital documents.

Aquino, then PAOCTF's operations chief, allegedly initially funded the surveillance operations with P20,000 drawn from the funds of the PAOCTF-Luzon headed by Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao.

Dumlao revealed that it was Aquino who told his boss, Mancao, that the special project had been approved by Lacson (whose call sign is 71) and Malacañang.

"*Noy, what is this* special operation?" Dumlao claimed to have overheard Mancao asking Aquino regarding the Dacer case.

Dumlao quoted Aquino as saying, "*Kay kwan yan,* Mr. Dacer. *Ok na yan sa* Malacañang, *pinag-usapan na yan.*"

Dumlao said that when Mancao asked Aquino if 71 (Lacson's call sign) knew about the special operation, Aquino replied: "*Sila na ang bahala sa kanya* (They would deal with him)."

Dumlao said that he checked in at the Manila Hotel and was able to locate the room of Dacer through the PR man's calling card given to him by Aquino.

Next instruction

Dumlao said Aquino's next instruction to him was to enter Dacer's suite, take whatever documents and monitor all the personalities and visitors of the publicist.

When he first failed to accomplish the mission, Dumlao said he was told by Aquino to set the room on fire or even to bomb it to destroy all the documents and computers there.

His mission on Dacer was temporarily halted because of the other cases he was handling and because he went to Bangkok to undergo a 45-day training.

However, sometime in October 2000, Dumlao said he was told by Aquino to revive the special operation.

When he told Aquino that he was about to finish another case, Aquino directed him to turn over the special operation to Chief Insp. Vicente Arnado.

On Nov. 24, 2000 at around 11 to 11:30 a.m. while he and Mancao were talking at the latter's office, he received a text message from Aquino, which said: "*Nakuha na si Delta, paki* T.I. (tactical interrogation) *mo na. Huwag kang magdala tao mo taga-Bicol.*"

When he went to the office of Aquino, Dumlao said he asked him what particular question he would ask Dacer, a Bicolano.

"*Itanong mo kung ano ang pinag-usapan nila ni Presidente, tapos ano ang balak ng oposisyon lalo na si* FVR (former President Fidel Ramos) *at* (Jose) Almonte (former National Security Adviser). *Iligaw mo pare di niya alam kung sino and kumuha sa kanya,*" Dumlao quoted Aquino as telling him.

Dumlao said he and Arnado and several PAOCTF personnel then proceeded to Cavite. While on their way, Dumlao said Arnado called Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, Task Force Visayas chief, and told him to go to the target area.

Cavite

Dumlao said they arrived at Dasmariñas, Cavite, at around 1 to 2 p.m. where he saw a white Toyota Corolla, a white Lite Ace van and a Toyota Revo.

He said Arnado and Senior Insp. Robert Lancauan interrogated Dacer inside the Lite Ace Van for 10 minutes. The duo, however, came back empty-handed.

When Dumlao interrogated Dacer, and asked him the questions Aquino had told him to ask Dacer, the public relations practitioner told him: "*Humihingi lang ng* advice (Dacer met with then President Joseph Estrada in Malacañang about two days before his abduction)."

On the plans of the opposition, Dumlao said Dacer told him: "*Kaibigan ko ng tagal yung mga yan. Kahit sa administrasyon, marami rin akong kaibigan* but I always stay neutral and professional."

After failing to extract information from Dacer, Dumlao said he called Aquino and told him that he could not get anything from him. Aquino told him to get Dacer's documents and return to the PAOCTF office.

When Dumlao told Arnado that he would go back to the task force headquarters in Camp Crame, Armado told him: "*Sige sir, ako na ang bahala dito.*"

Later, Dumlao said, Mancao told him to dispose of the documents taken from Dacer, which he brought to La Mesa Dam where he burned them.

Dumlao said Mancao told him that details of the operations had been reported to "71" (Lacson).

Hostage crisis once again shows power, daring of radio

EVERY morning, millions of Filipinos start their day by listening to live human melodrama.

On some radio programs, jilted housewives plead for their husbands to come home, and lovestruck teenagers seek advice from "Dr. Love's Clinic."

On others, the topic is deadly serious—rebel leaders or alleged coup plotters debating their causes with government officials in a battle for hearts and minds.

In a country where many people have no access to television or newspapers, much less the Internet, a cheap pocket radio still beats other media as the primary source of news and commentary across the sprawling archipelago.

"We form public opinion. In a country so poor and uninformed, anything we say is gospel truth," said Butch Canoy, vice president for operations of Radio Mindanao Network, arguably the most controversial radio station in the country.

But the government isn't always happy with the role that radio plays during crises.

That is certainly the case in the current drama surrounding the kidnapping of about two dozen people, including three Americans, by the Abu Sayyaf, a Moro bandit group.

President Macapagal-Arroyo requested a news blackout after launching a military offensive in Basilan where the bandits are holding the hostages.

But RMN, based in Zamboanga City and heard nationwide, has aired live phone conversations with the Abu Sayyaf spokesperson, Abu Sabaya, and three of his captives.

Talking on a satellite phone that he carries through Basilan's jungles, Sabaya said on the air last week that his group had beheaded one of their American captives, Guillermo Sobero, 40, of Corona, California. According to the military, it believes Sobero is dead, but no remains have been found.

On Thursday, RMN was used to send a message the other direction. It carried a statement from Sobero's sister, Ana, from California. In it, she urged Sabaya to tell her whether Sobero was still alive and, if so, to protect him for the benefit of his children.

"If he's alive, don't hurt him," she said on the phone to the RMN station in Zamboanga City, about 30 kilometers from Basilan.

"He's a family man and he has four children who are crying for his return. If he's already dead . . . please give us information on where his remains are . . . because my family would like to give him a proper burial here at home, where he belongs."

RMN's Canoy has been fielding phone calls on his mobile phone from President Macapagal, military officials and Cabinet ministers while covering the three-week-old hostage drama nonstop.

Radio Abu Sayyaf

The private Organization of Philippine Broadcasters said it would investigate government complaints that RMN—derisively dubbed "Radio Abu Sayyaf" by some disgruntled competitors—is going overboard in its reporting on the rebels.

Canoy denied the allegation.

"The government accuses us being the rebels' propaganda mouthpiece. I say we're just delivering the news. That's our job. We exercise editorial freedom within the bounds of professional journalism," Canoy said in an interview.

Some academics say that the Macapagal administration's media clampdown is a reflection of the government's mistrust of radio commentators, who are known to make sweeping commentaries based more on opinion than fact.

"The Philippines is a very personal-based culture. The problem is that broadcasters are seen as role models who can do no wrong," said Rosa Maria Feliciano, chair of the broadcasting communications department at the University of the Philippines.

A REPAIRMAN works on a radio in his cluttered shop in Santa Cruz, Manila. Every day, millions of Filipinos start their day by listening to the radio which in poor rural areas is the only source of news. AP

600 radio stations

Government statistics show the country has more than 600 radio stations, reaching up to 90 percent of the country's 76.8 million people.

Only 8.5 million households have television sets, and only 3.6 million have VCRs, according to the National Telecommunications Commission.

There are no statistics available on Internet users.

Radio's power was most obvious in 1986, when millions of people poured out into Edsa after Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin went on the air supporting the pro-democracy movement against then President Ferdinand Marcos.

Soon afterward, Edsa People Power I led to his ouster after 21 years in office.

Things have changed among the country's upper and middle classes. The Edsa People Power II that forced out President Joseph Estrada in January was launched by mobile phone text messages.

But when it comes to reaching the far-flung masses and the poor, nothing still beats the radio. *AP*

Loren: 47 Chinoys have fallen prey to kidnappers this year

(From page A1)

were part of a destabilization plot, Legarda said: "Indeed, there are allegations of political maneuvering, of political motivations. That I am not sure I agree with."

This was because, she said, "for me, a crime is crime and when they present facts and figures and names of people, I don't think that can be invented. That is not the product of the imagination of the members of the (federation)."

Legarda said there was a need to determine the role of the National Anti-Crime Council, a new superbody created by the President, in fighting crime.

"Is this an admission that the police are not capable of doing their job?" Legarda said.

She warned that the new superbody might duplicate the role of the police in taking charge of internal security problems and thus "might send the wrong signal that the police are not capable of doing their job."

LEGARDA

RP kids unhappy, says Unicef study

(From page A1)

Wars and terrorism were also reported as factors in "fighting."

"Screaming" and "hitting" were defined as people inside the home verbally abusing one another at high decibels and physically hurting one another

The survey employed face-to-face interviews with the respondents in their homes, but without the presence of parents or other third parties that might influence their answers.

The questions included whether the children were happy "most of the time," "only sometimes" or "almost never."

In the Philippines, 34 percent of the respondents said they were happy most of the time, and 64 percent, only sometimes.

The questions also focused on their knowledge about children's rights, HIV-AIDS and other issues as well as their perceptions on family life, school, and society in general.

More violence

The Filipino children's responses showed more exposure to violence than the regional average.

Only about 22 percent of the respondents from all 17 countries had experienced fighting, just 15 percent had been threatened, 10 percent were robbed, and only 10 percent were victims of assault.

Asked about violence in their homes, more than half the number of the Filipino respondents (58 percent) reported screaming, and 33 percent, hitting.

While 58 percent of the total respondents also said there was screaming at home, the reported incidence of hitting was slightly lower at 29 percent for the whole region.

The Unicef said the experience of greater violence might explain why only 34 percent of Filipino children reported being happy most of the time compared to a high 51 percent of the total, and 64 percent said they felt happy only sometimes compared to 47 percent of the total.

Views and concerns

The survey was commissioned by the Unicef East Asia and Pacific Regional Office to give the region's young people the opportunity to air their views and concerns *vis a vis* their governments, families and the public.

Another major focus of the survey was young people's knowledge of their rights and whether these were being respected.

Under the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by all the countries in the region, governments are required to use all the means at their disposal to uphold the rights and safeguard the well being of children.

While 61 percent of all the respondents said children had rights like adults, only in five claimed to know "a lot" about those rights, the Unicef said. The 39 percent that answered "no" or "do not know" to the question of whether children had rights represents some 117 million children and adolescents in the region.

More than 20 percent of all the respondents said their rights to information, expression of ideas and opinions, and not to be hurt or mistreated were not being respected in their countries.

Asked to identify their rights, 51 percent of all the respondents named education; 32 percent, freedom of expression; and 21 percent, not to be hurt or mistreated.

The Unicef and its partners will use the information gathered by the survey to advocate for the rights of young people and influence policy decisions. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

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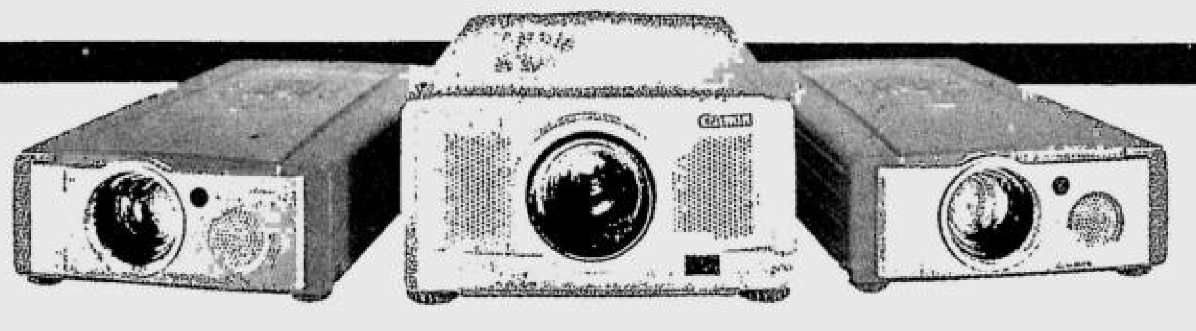

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SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▤ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Tolomia cops MVP award

SHARK'S key player Chester Tolomia bagged the Most Valuable Player award in the 2001 PBL Chairman's Cup Individual Achievement Awards yesterday at the Makati Coliseum. Tolomia amassed a total of 662.8 points after topping the statistics up to the end of the semifinal round and earned the most number of votes from players, team officials and the media.

Welcoat sweeps Shark

BY DENNIS EROA

TITLEHOLDER Welcoat Paints marked its return to the top in overpowering style as it shellacked Shark Energy Drink, 70-62, last night to sweep the PBL Chairman's Cup championship series before a delirious crowd at the Makati Coliseum.

In a massive show of force, the Paintmasters never surrendered an inch against the jittery Power Boosters to fashion out the win and duplicate their 4-0 sweep of last year's Chairman's Cup best-of-seven series titular series over the same rivals.

The victory also reaffirmed the supremacy of Welcoat as it jacked up its haul of PBL titles to four, all of which happened via sweeps, a feat unmatched even by the league's winningest team Tanduay which had six titles.

Welcoat also brought the broom in winning title showdowns over Red Bull and Ana Freezers, respectively last year.

"We came out spewing fire and finished burning," said sharpshooter Ren' Ren Ritualo, who bannered Welcoat's attack with 13 points, including two free throws which iced the game for the Paintmasters, 67-59, 40 seconds remaining.

Coach Junel Baculi praised his charges for a job well done. "Credit goes to the boys," said Baculi, who now have five titles, four from Welcoat and one from Hapee Toothpaste. He also avenged Welcoat's 4-3 setback to Shark in the Challenge Cup.

At the start, Shark flashed its deadly bite as it surged ahead, 5-0. This proved to be the Power Boosters' brightest moment as the Paintmasters painted the town red in the second quarter, 46-29.

Hounded by faulty free throw shooting (13 of 26), Shark was unable to crack Welcoat's solid plays. Chester Tolomia, adjudged conference's MVP before the game, continued his miserable finals shows, while Gilbert Malabanan, Rysal Castro and Rolly Basilides crumbled under pressure.

After posting a 53-45 lead, finals MVP Jojo Manalo, Ritualo, Celino Cruz, Brix Encarnacion and Yancy de Ocampo kept Shark at bay with stellar plays.

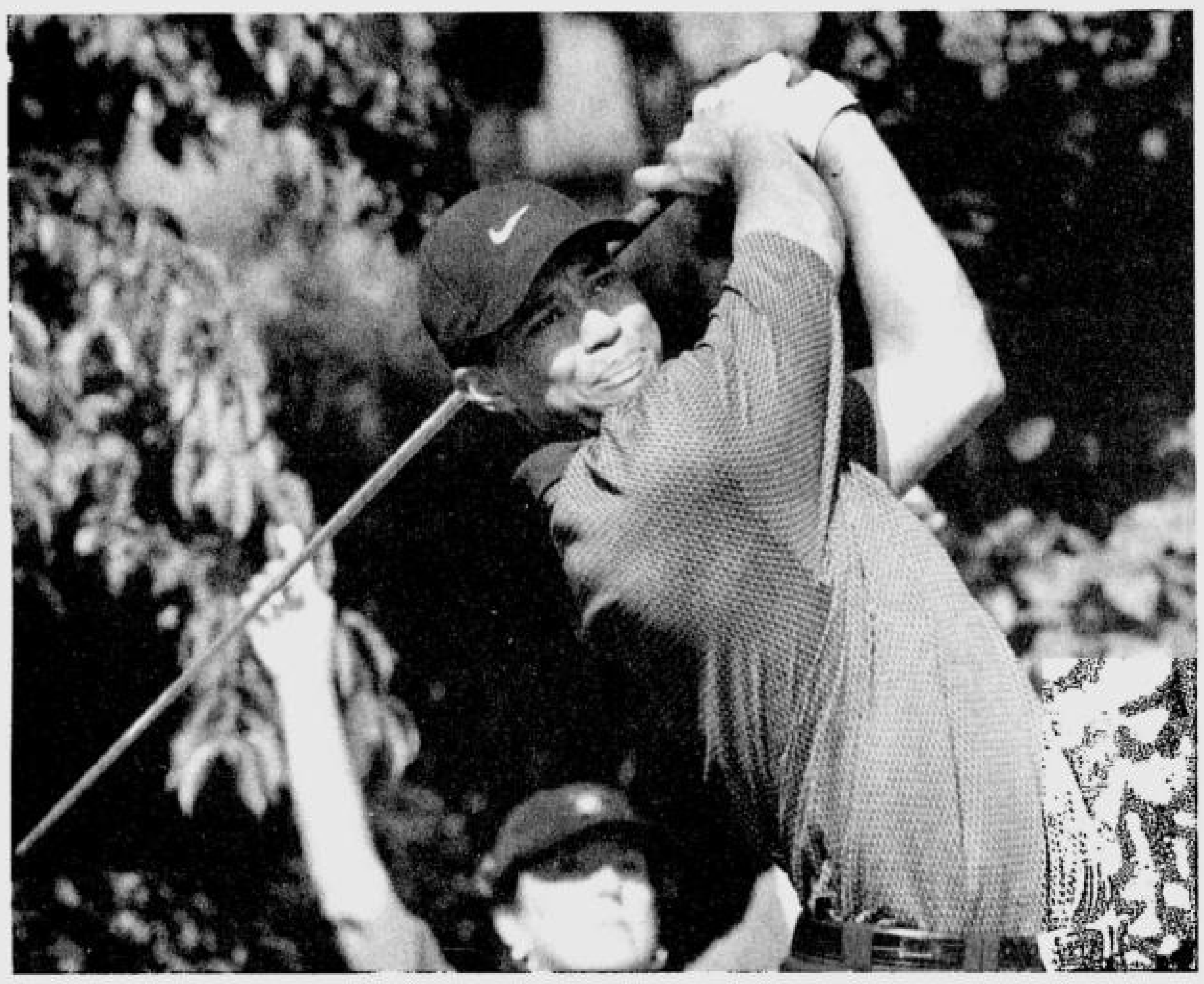
Meanwhile, GIV Beauty Soap mentor Nat Canson received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the PBL Press Corps for his dedication and drive for excellence. Aside from coaching various national teams, Canson also had a colorful career in the pros.

Scores:

WELCOAT 70—Ritualo 13, Encarnacion 10, De Ocampo 10, Manalo 9, Tan 9, Patrimonio 5, Cruz 5, Canlas 4, Orfrecio 3, Tolentino 2.

SHARK 62—Castro 20, Tolomia 13, Robinson 11, Sotto 7, Basilides 6, Malabanan 3, Caceres 2, Ybanez 0, Ortega 0.

Quarters: 19-16, 46-29, 53-45, 70-62.



BUICK CLASSIC AP

Tiger Woods follows through on the 15th hole at the Westchester Country Club during the Buick Classic Pro-Am tournament in Harrison, New York, Wednesday. Despite seeing his championship streak snapped, Woods says he'll focus on winning the Buick Classic starting today with Grand Slam intensity.

FVR leads ceremonial tee-off

FORMER President Fidel Ramos, top business leaders, government officials and ambassadors will tee off in the President GMA-Philippine Business for Social Progress Cup today at the Manila Golf and Country Club.

Funds raised from the tournament will go to PBSP's Mindanao and Peace Development Program and the various poverty alleviation projects that will be undertaken by the Office of the President.

The tournament is supported by major sponsors Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., First Philippine Holdings and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Hole sponsors are the Aboitiz Group of Companies, Asian Terminals Inc., City Metro Manila Tollways Corp. Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. Inc., and United Laboratories. Hole-in-one sponsors, meanwhile, are Toyota and Pioneer Insurance and Surety Corp.

Other leading corporations who will participate in the tournament include team sponsors, Joaquin Cunanan & Co., Philippine National Oil Corp. and Sycip, Incorporated. A. Soriano Corporation, Citibank, NA Land Bank of the Philippines and Petron Corp. also lent support to the tournament.

SPORTSWATCH

De La Hoya retiring if he loses

LAS VEGAS—Oscar De La Hoya is giving his fans one good reason to buy Saturday's (Sunday in Manila) fight with WBC 154-pound (69.853 kilogram) champion Javier Castillejo. If he loses, De La Hoya says it will be the last time they see him in the ring. De La Hoya said Wednesday his attempt for a title in a fifth weight class will either be successful or he will retire. "A loss would mean that's it, it's over," De La Hoya said. "I would have no reason to be inside the ring anymore." Oddsmakers don't figure De La Hoya's career is much at risk. He's a 9-1 favorite to beat the Spanish champion and become a titleholder once again. *AP*

4WD challenge slated Sunday

MINI 4WD enthusiasts are invited to join the third leg of the Mini 4WD challenge 2001 race at the Orosa Atrium of Robinson's Place starting at 10 a.m. on Sunday, June 24. With a cast headed by actor-sportsman Jomari Yllana, the technical/open race is the third in a six-part series presented by Channel V with the support of Robinson's Place Manila, Bench, Joey 92.3, 939KCFM and Yamaha. Organized by Tom's Sports International Corp., the fourth leg is scheduled at the Alabang Town Center on Sunday, July 15, also from 10 a.m. A cash prize of P20,000 or a brand-new scooter will be at stake in the series which will end up on Aug. 11, also at Robinsons Place Manila. For details, call tel. nos. 534-0455/56 or 534-1457 or e-mail tomsports@skyinet.net.

RP taekwondo team cited

THE PETRON Philippine team came home victorious from the 2001 World Cup Taekwondo Championships recently held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Tshomlee Go bagged a silver medal, while Roberto Cruz, Eva Marie Ditan and Dax Alberto Morefe each won a bronze. Upon their return, the athletes were personally congratulated by Petron president and CEO Motassim A. Al-Ma'ashouq and awarded plaques of recognition during simple rites hosted by Petron, a major sponsor of the team's trips abroad. The Petron Philippine Taekwondo team is set to compete in the SEA Games to be held in Kuala Lumpur this September.

Tuason Cup June 29-July 1

AFTER a long wait, it's open season again as all roads lead to the Armscor Shooting range in Marikina on June 29 to July 1 for the Bolo Tuason Cup. The three-day shooting festival will showcase the best practical shooters vying for the NCR Area Championship trophy. There will be 12 challenging stages to qualify for the division championships. The Philippine Practical Shooting Association (PPSA) is organizing the meet in cooperation with Armscor, Days Hotel, 99.5 RT and Front Sight.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Glorious Riches 2. Oishi Oishi 3. Man of the Hour
Race 2—1. Ocean Magic 2. Gifted Angel 3. Waw 4. Rose and Toy
Race 3—1. Sham Sham 2. Snowy Market 3. Kiss Em Goodbye 4. As for Me
Race 4—1. Golden Prince 2. Golden Tale 3. Gambatte 4. Photogenic
Race 5—1. Perfect Lyza 2. Pasikatera 3. Unsalagi 4. Glory Allelujia
Race 6—1. Go Johnny Go 2. Impeccable//Ariana's Pride 3. Plus Factor 4. Jervi's Bay
Race 7—1. Royal Diamond 2. Crystal Horizon 3. Renegade 4. Real Piker Master
Race 8—1. Boss Lino 2. Portal Dancer 3. Aringkingking 4. Timber Nectar
Race 9—1. Storm Princess 2. Jhelen 3. Hingis 4. Breathless Charm

Landicho ahead by 4 over Chico

ANGELES CITY—Lucy Landicho took a hefty four-stroke lead over Ruby Chico-Walker with solid efforts of 78 and 71 going into today's final round of the Titleist Footjoy National Amateur Circuit fifth leg at the Mimosa Golf and Country Club course here.

Landicho's 149 aggregate put her in a position to score her first victory in the series so far dominated by Walker (76-78-154) and Carmelette Villaroman, who rebounded from an 84 with a 74 for 158.

Marvin Dumandan of del Monte led national caddie champ Jay Bayron by just a stroke after 54 holes of the men's championship battle of the circuit conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Titleist and Footjoy.

Dumandan tallied a third-round 72 of 221, keeping at bay Bayron who fired a 71-222. Jong Laput, tied with Dumandan for the top spot after two rounds, slid to third but was only four back at 225.

Korea, RP kegler shine

KOREAN BOWLER Hwang Hye Ryoung and Filipino campaigner CJ Suarez banked on explosive stars to rule the Youth Masters girls' and boys' finals, respectively, Thursday in the Boysen-PBC 2001 championships at Green Valley lanes in Pasig City.

Hwang uncorked a 256 in the first game en route to a 10-game series of 1978 to hold off Indonesia's Sharon Adelina (1951) and fellow Korean Chae Eun Ju (1947).

Carrying the colors of PBAP-Bowlmart, Suarez carded 2068 after opening with a 257 to beat fellow Filipinos Gin Mansilungan (2047) and Garry Custodio (2025).

SJ Knights fined ₱88,000 for fouls

GAMES TODAY
Araullo gym *(Cabanatuan City)*
3:00 p.m.—Davao vs Nueva Ecija
Cebu Coliseum
5:30 p.m.—Negros vs Cebu

BY ROY LUARCA

FOULS can be costly if done intentionally.

The Andok's San Juan Knights found this out the other day after they were assessed a whopping P88,000 in total fines for the fouling binge they undertook in a 137-105 loss to the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the Cebu City Coliseum on June 15.

MBA commissioner Ogie Narvasa meted out the fines and suspensions after viewing the tape of the game on Tuesday and hearing the side of the Knights, including team owner Sandy Javier, on Wednesday.

Andok's head coach Philip Cezar got the biggest fine of P30,000 plus a one-game suspension due to his bigger responsibility to the conduct of his players. In addition, Cezar's one-game suspension on July 26, 2000, was reinstated so he'll have to sit out the Knights' next two games.

Narvasa also penalized for P2,000 each foul committed by the Knights after the 9:42 mark of the fourth quarter with the Gems ahead, 89-73.

In effect, Randy Alcantara was fined P10,000 for the five fouls he committed within that span, plus P2,000 for a flagrant foul 1.

Other players with their corresponding fines were Chris Calaguio (P4,000), Danny Capobres (P6,000), Gilbert Castillo (6,000), Bruce Dacia (P8,000), Philip Newton (P6,000), Omanzie Rodriguez (P4,000) and Mike Otto (P2,000). Ferdinand Rodriguez was fined P5,000 and suspended for one game due to rough play, while team captain Vilmer Banares also got a P5,000 fine.

Meanwhile, the Negros Slashers and the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems meet anew today.

The Slashers beat the Gems, 95-91, in their first encounter in Bacolod City, but they would have to fare better if they wish to repeat over the Gems in their 5:30 p.m. encounter at the Cebu City Coliseum

Baguio 3 on 3 starts

BAGUIO CITY—The Nike 3 on 3 basketball championship gets going today with 20 teams, led by defending champion St. Louis University, seeing action at the University of Baguio gym to dispute the first berth to the national finals.

St. Louis University faces a host of challengers in its bid to return to the national finals set Aug. 18 at SM Megamall in Mandaluyong.

The other participating teams are UB Prep. High-University of Baguio, CCDC-Cordillera Career Development College, Pine Montessori School, BCF-Baguio Colleges Foundation, UNP-University of Northern Philippines, SLP-St. Louis Pacdal, BSU-Benget State University, BCNHS-Baguio City National High School, ECI-Eater College Inc;

St. Anthony School, AMPMNHS-Pacalso National High School, Laoakan High School, Rizal High School, Dona Aurora High School, San Jose High School, TSHI-Tublay School of Homes Industries, SLHS-PX-St Louis Philex, UB Sci HS-University of Baguio Science High School and PCNHS Pines City National High School.

Invited to grace the opening ceremonies prior to the actual competition are Baguio councilor Peter "Rey" Bautista and PSC Commissioner William Ramirez. Also expected are Nike sports marketing manager Auty Villarama, tournament director Tanny Gonzalez and Nike 3 on 3 coordinator Danny Soria.

Danny Cup meeting set

AN organizational-dinner meeting of the 3rd Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament will be held at 7 p.m. today at the Wild Duck Restaurant along Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

Coaches and managers of teams interested in joining the event set to start on July 7 at the Makati Coliseum have been invited to the meeting by Commissioner Mar Morelos, PBA player and newly elected Valenzuela City councilor, and Rolando P. Tumapat, acting chair and secretary general of organizer NBC (National Basketball Conference) and project manager.

Defending champion Montaña Pawnshop heads the teams. The others are Spring Cooking Oil, Philippine Army, Wang's Ball Club, Sulpicio Lines, G.P. Maryson, Emilio Aguinaldo College, Skyland Estate, MLQ-Boysen Paints, Metro Manila College, TIP, St. Jude College, Trinity College, Central Colleges of the Philippines, Las Piñas College and PCCr.

For other details, interested teams may contact Tumapat at tel. no. 743-0810 from 6 to 8 a.m. and 5 to 11 p.m. or Angelo Penaranda of Wild Duck at tel. no. 851-3109 and 851-3110 during office hours.

Jungolf tourney at Riviera

THE JUNIOR Golf Foundation of the Philippines will hold an 18-hole fund-raising tournament today at the tough Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite. Tee-off starts at 7 a.m.

Proceeds from the event dubbed "Love for Jungolf 25th anniversary tournament" will be used to support the Philippine delegations to the Junior World championships in San Diego California and the Optimist International in Florida and also fund Jungolf's activities for the remainder of the year and the 2001 program.

The confirmed sponsors are MG Forex, Triple M International Placement, Corp., Triple A International Placement, Inc., Edgar See/Pisanti, Albert See/MIT Air, Friends from the Philippine National Police, Col. Pedro Balinang, PNP Civil Security Group, Cebu Pacific, Northwest, Cutting Room & Chatterbox, Wilson De Villa, Sonny Yee and Jimmy Go.

Pop faces P'foods; Pals meet Beermen

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m.—Purefoods vs Pop Cola
7:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Mobiline

BY JUNE NAVARRO

FOUR teams, fresh from their recent victories in the import-flavored PBA Commissioner's Cup, cross paths today at the Philsports Arena.

Riding high on a two-game winning streak, Pop Cola attempts to make it three in a row when it faces Purefoods in the opener.

The Panthers brought their act to Ormoc City last weekend and subdued the Tanduay Rhummasters, 99-88, for a 2-2 tally.

Purefoods, on the other hand, had a heads-up performance from reinforcement David Wood when it routed Sta. Lucia Realty, 65-54, Friday night.

Wood, a 38-year-old NBA veteran, took the initiative as the Hotdogs barged into the win-column with a 1-2 card.

The other game pits second-running San Miguel Beer against the Jerod Ward-spiked Mobiline Phone Pals.

Recovering from a confidence-snapping debacle against Alaska, the Beermen rode on the exploits of Nate Johnson to nip Red Bull, 87-83, and get back on the winning track.

San Miguel is a game behind the unbeaten Alaska Aces (4-0) at 3-1.

Failing to deliver against the Thunder, Danny Seigle is expected to bounce back against the Phone Pals, who are carrying a 2-1 slate.

The high-scoring Jerod Ward will banner the Phone Pals and again aim for a projected 70-point average per outing.

Though he scored most of the Phone Pals' points in their last three games, Ward has yet to reach the 70-point plateau, a prediction he made even before the conference started.

ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

BEACH FOOTBALL

Commercial model Ardel de Jesus kicks the ball during an exciting game of beach football at the Rexona Ultimate Challenge Series in Boracay. RUCS is part of Rexona's long-term effort in encouraging the youth to engage in healthy activities such as sports. For more news about RUCS, visit its website at www.ultimatechallengeseries.com.

Checkmate clinic

LAST batch of enrollees for the fourth series of Milo Checkmate Saturday-only clinic have until tomorrow, June 23, to register or call MCC at 826-8560.

The chess lectures will be held from 8 a.m.-12 noon at the Badminton Bldg., Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, Vito Cruz, Manila and 2-6 p.m. at the 2/F Center Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan.

Dableo paces chess qualifying

STANDINGS AFTER 5 ROUNDS:
Dableo 4.5 points; Donguines, Nadera, Nolie, Lao 4; Paragua, Garma, Bancod, Pacis, Sanchez 3.5; Milagrosa, Del Mundo 3.

NATIONAL Master Ronald Dableo proved steadier in the endgame, hacking out a 67-move win over IM Ronald Bancod to assume the solo lead after five rounds in the Qualification Tournament for the Asian Continental Championship at the Center Mall, Gereenhills Shopping Center, San Juan, Metro Manila.

The 21-year-old Dableo, a senior at the San Sebastian College, outplayed the higher seed Bancod in a knight and bishop endgame of a Reti to bring his total 4.5 points in five rounds, only half a point better than four other veteran campaigners.

NM Elias Lao, the arbiter-turned-giant-killer in the nine-round Swiss system tournament, settled for draw with Baguio City's NM Rolando Nolte after 35 pushes of a Center Counter to lead three other second-placers with four points a piece.

Monfort Memorial tilt tomorrow

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation will hold the Chris Monfort Memorial Festival tomorrow at the Ateneo College soccer ground in honor of the late PFF secretary general who died in a car accident two weeks ago.

A total of 40 teams will see action in the men's division and 15 in the women's division in the event being held to pay tribute to Monfort who was also the Ateneo Football Center director before he died.

"This is one small way of recognizing Monfort's major contribution in promoting and popularizing football in our country. If the sport is showing a comeback, much of the credit goes to Monfort's efforts," said PFF president Rene Adad.

POC stops NSA elections

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee yesterday declared a moratorium on the holding of elections among national sports associations until after the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games in September.

In a one-page statement, the Olympic body said the sudden change of NSA leadership would disrupt the country's preparation for the biennial sporting conclave.

It added that the POC would not send any representative to monitor or recognize any such election effective last Wednesday, the day Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal won his fifth presidential election in the other faction of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

The other BAP faction elected Lito Puyat president last June 7.

The 10-man POC Executive Board said a change of leadership would "undermine the morale and focus of all our athletes and coaches."

The POC Executive Board, however, exempted cycling, karatedo and softball from its directive.

It said the three NSAs were authorized by the POC Arbitration Committee to settle their internal disputes by holding an election.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Sports Commission will embark on a scouting mission of athletes from foreign countries set to compete in the SEA Games.

PSC Commissioner Richie Garcia said they were trying to get hold of representatives from different embassies across the region.

Garcia, however, lamented that the scarcity of RP sports attachés in the region would make it difficult for the PSC to realize that aim.

"But we will try to make it possible to be able to size up the opposition," said Garcia.

The PSC also touched off with its daily monitoring of athletes through its coaches, believing that coaches are the most accurate reporters on the athletes' progress.

PSC chair Carlos Tuason said they would encourage a man-to-man approach on the monitoring of athletes by getting feedbacks and consulting with the coaches.

"Unlike having a chat with the NSA heads regarding the chances of their athletes, talking to coaches is a more realistic approach," said Garcia. "Because, as expected, the NSA heads will boast that their athletes can win the gold."

Silverio Formula 3 champion

Overall standing after four rounds:
1-2 J. Silverio (Standard Insurance-Team Tom's), M. Goddard (Ghiasports) 55 points; 3. P. Alvendia (Kart 1) 25; 4-5 P. Marave (Shell), R. Joson (Kart 1) 12.

SUBIC—On a day the world celebrated Father's Day, Jojo Silverio gave his father Dante Silverio something to cheer about.

Silverio redeemed himself from a heartbreaking performance in the inaugural rounds seven Sundays ago and swept the Asian Formula 3 Challenge before a big weekend crowd at the Subic International Raceway on June 17.

Looking supremely confident despite the "early afternoon downpour that made the 2.8 km course a lot more difficult," Silverio outduelled first-leg champion Mark Goddard of Ghiasports in an exciting battle featuring precision-built, carbon fiber, single-seater cars powered by two-liter race engines.

The 40-year-old multi-awarded motorsports campaigner clocked 19:19.414 in the rain-shortened second race, including the fastest lap time of 1:25.666 in the seventh lap.

Goddard, who is best remembered for serving as safety driver in both the Formula 1 and World Touring Car Championships, settled for second place with a total time of 19:25.098. His fastest lap time of 1:26.312, however, paled in comparison to his time of 1:17.917 during the qualifying time trials.

"It was really a struggle, especially when the rain came. But I have to give credit to my team for putting the car together although we were guessing what the set-up would be," said Silverio, who finished second to Goddard in the second round held at the Batangas Racing Circuit last April 29.

It was a fitting win for Silverio, who is hoping to follow the footsteps of his father, now retired but still regarded as among the greatest Filipino race car drivers.

Manansala to host Pasay derby tonight

CONSISTENT derbyist Cito Manansala will host a special 4-cock derby at the Pasay City Cockpit at 7 tonight. More than 60 fights have been lined-up.

According to pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano, a cash prize of P300,000 is at stake. The required entry fee is P10,000.

Also scheduled at PCC is another big 4-cock derby on June 29, with sportsman Boy Guinto as host.

Meanwhile, the PCC 14th Anniversary 5-Cock Derby, slated on July 19 and July 21, continues to draw the attention of cockers and breeders due to its unique format. At stake is at least P1 million. The entry fee is P15,000.

Participants who will pay the entry fee on the first day automatically get an important VCD players worth almost P3,000. The champions get a 21-inch color TV each while runners-up receive CD player double cassette recorders.

For reservation, call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

Copa opener grosses ₱17M

A TOTAL of P17.6 million in sales was posted last Wednesday during the Gran Copa de Manila Racing Festival's opening card.

It was one of the highest grossing opening day cards at the San Lazaro Hippodrome since the introduction of the 5-day racing week format.

The festive celebration continues at the Manila Jockey Club tonight as the racefest goes into high gear with another impressive lineup of quality races.

A total of five MJCI Special Races will be on tap for tonight's nine-race schedule, providing fans with a sneak preview of this Sunday's all-day parade of special stakes races. The winner of each MJCI Special Race is set to receive 110,000 plus an P18,000 additional prize from the P30,000-added bonus sponsored by the MJC. Total sales this Sunday is expected to reach P36.023 million.

Gran Copa, two decades after

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

OF COURSE, champion horse Wind Blown will pick up the P600,000 paycheck and the silver cup after going through the notions against the six-horse field this Sunday afternoon.

In the 22nd staging of the annual Gran Copa de Manila at the San Lazaro Hippodrome, the four-year old horse simply has too much speed and skill to suffer an unlikely defeat in Sunday's 1900-meter classic, the same distance he covered in posting a masterful victory in the recent Founders' Cup, renamed the Prieto Cup, also at the Tayuman turf.

During the last Prieto Cup on May 27, I still remember what my esteemed friend Andy Jao said, "*Matatalo lamang si* Wind Blown *kung siya ay mapipilay.*" The injury did not happen. As a result, the heavily favored galloper, formerly owned by noted sportsman-businessman Sandy Javier, won the race by the proverbial mile.

Under new owner Hermie Esguerra, Wind Blown has preserved his winning ways and, with the odds stacked greatly in his favor, is tipped to win again on Sunday before another sellout crowd. The Gran Copa is expected to gross P35.777 million, surpassing last year's sales of P35,330,000.

This year's edition of the Gran Copa, a highlight of the "Araw ng Maynila" celebrations, will cap a five-day racing calendar which started last Wednesday under the aegis of the historic Manila Jockey Club now headed by lawyer Alfonso Reyno.

"The Gran Copa is also an ideal opportunity for the MJC and the local horseracing industry to join Manilans in marking the city's 430th foundation this year," said MJC executive vice president and chief operating officer Roberto Reverente.

In the thumbnail history of the Gran Copa, MJC listed several incidents leading to its development.

The historic event began in 1898 when sportsminded members of the Manila's elite undertook elaborate preparations for the year's racing festival. An ornate silver cup made in Hong Kong and called the "Gran Copa de Manila" was ordered by the MJC to be awarded to the winner of a special race scheduled on the first day of May at the then Sta. Mesa Hippodrome of the club. However, on the eve of the big race, American Commodore George Dewey stormed Manila Bay and fought the Spanish armada to start the Spanish-American War.

With the cancellation of the races, the "Gran Copa" was returned to Hong Kong and stored at the vault of Shanghai Bank for the duration of the war. The cup was brought back in 1946 to MJC where it was displayed at the VIP lounge, staying there until 1971, the year the "Gran Copa" was reduced to ashes following a disastrous fire that hit the club.

On June 24, 1980, through the efforts of then Manila Mayor Ramon Bagatsing and supported by the late Makati Mayor and Philippine Racing Commission chair Nemesio Yabut and the MJC, the first Gran Copa Stakes Race was held, with the long unawarded silver cup finally up for grabs. Since then, the Gran Copa Stakes Race, one of the country's most prestigious and most popular races, has been staged every year, coinciding with the distinguished birthday of the city of Manila.

Dome cockfest finals

FILIPINO cockers are tipped to rule the excitement-filled World Slasher 8-Cock Derby which ends tonight at the Araneta Coliseum before another sellout crowd.

Engineer Gerry Fevidal, fielding the superbly-conditioned battle cocks of MYL Geran, scored four straight wins at the conclusion of the elimination matches early yesterday morning to take the solo lead entering today's crucial four-cock finals.

Another local entry, Mulawin Argem Coliseum II of Rep. Rudy Albano, trailed closely with 3-1/2 points.

More than a dozen other entries posted identical three points to remain in the running for fame and fortune in the blue-ribbon derby hosted by Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Gov. Ito Ynares and the Firefly Group and sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Wimbledon Official Film 2000 at 7 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Stella Artois Championships, Quarterfinals at 2 p.m. (r), Semifinal #1 at 6 p.m., Semifinal #2 at 10 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: Senior PGA - The Countrywide Tradition Highlights at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

LPGA Evian Masters, Third Round at 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. (r), Final Round at 11:30 p.m. on ESPN

Inside the PGA Tour at 11:30 a.m. (r – 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

U.S. Open Golf Championship Highlights, Final Round at 1 p.m. on Star Sports and at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN

BASKETBALL: NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

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VERMIGO Ang Berdugo sa Bulate
Name:
Address:
Game Fowl Population:
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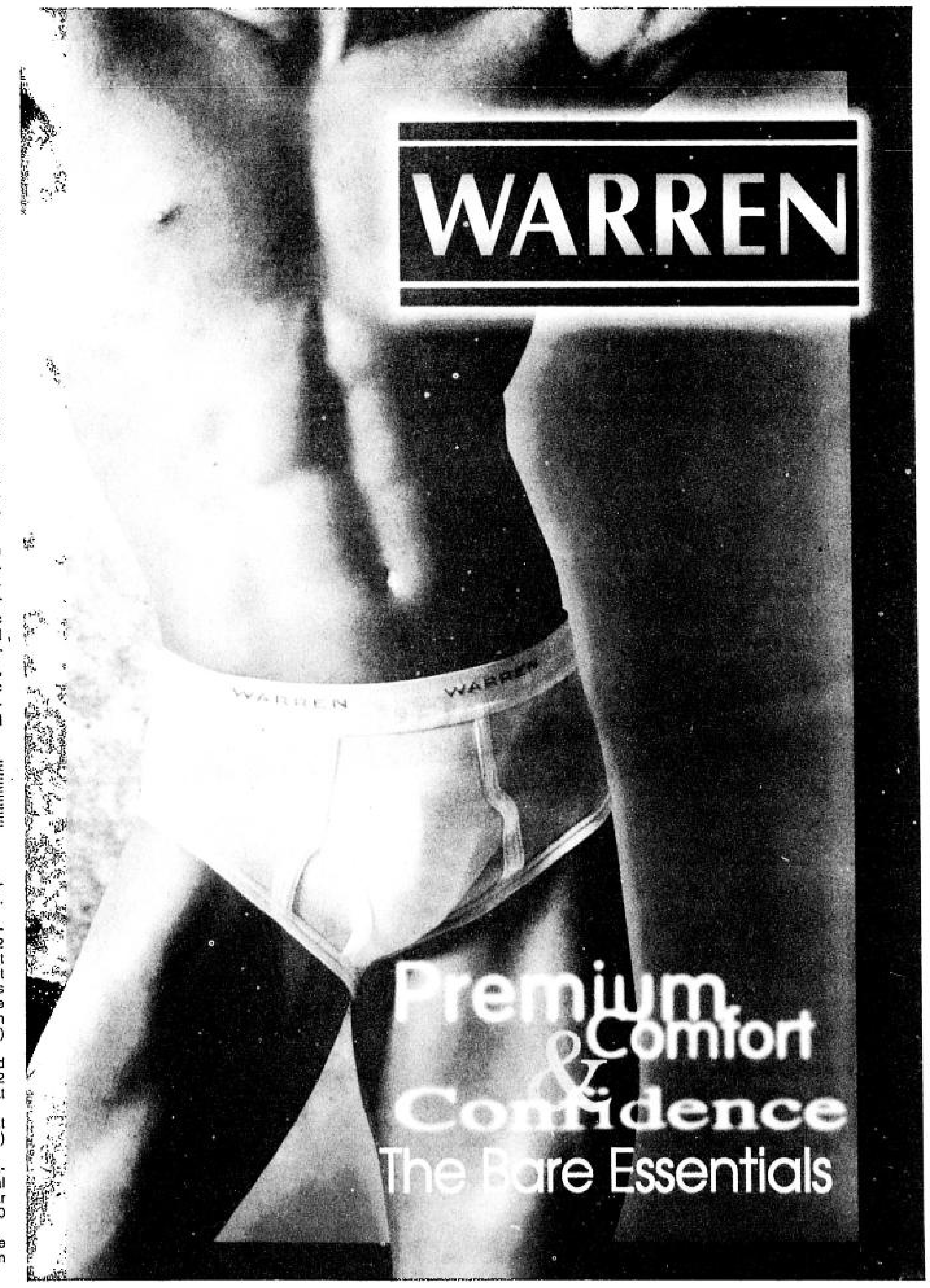

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20 taon

Kay Sarap Ng Ngiting McDo

METRO
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

2 car thieves killed

ALERT Central Police District (CPD) agents gunned down two of four car theft suspects during a road chase in Quezon City yesterday. One of the slain suspects was identified as a certain Liderato M. Rebosa, of Hernandez St. Catmon, Malabon, Rebosa and the other suspects were on board a red Nissan Sentra (with plate number TNJ-850) when the police caught up with them after a 10-minute car chase. *P. Tubeza*

Abu alert in Metro

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

THE CENTRAL Police District went on alert yesterday after it received reports that Abu Sayyaf terrorists may embark on a bombing blitz in Metro Manila.

The INQUIRER learned of the alleged threat after it got hold of a memorandum issued yesterday to all 11 stations of the police district, warning of a possible terror campaign in Metro Manila.

But Deputy Director-General Romeo Peña, head of the National Capital Region Police Office, denied he received any report on the Abu Sayyaf threat on the capital.

"I don't know that," Peña said. "If that report came from the CPD, my office should have known about it."

He said the five metro police districts submit to the NCRPO all information on possible security threats in Metro Manila. These reports are then thoroughly investigated.

"Maybe, somebody is sowing it (as disinformation)," Peña added. "It's impossible that I should know nothing about it."

According to the CPD memo, an Abu Sayyaf unit arrived in Zamboanga City on June 11 and later left for Manila.

The unit was bound for a "very important meeting (in Manila), which could be an indication of such a (bombing) plan," the memo said.

The report added the terrorists were meeting with one of their sympathizers in Metro Manila, an engineer named Asrap Kunting.

All CPD stations were ordered to intensify intelligence gathering efforts and enforce countermeasures against the terrorist group.

The military is now hunting down Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan and Sulu after they kidnapped tourists and workers from a beach resort in Palawan and a plantation in Basilan.

The police are afraid the terrorist group might launch a bombing campaign, not just in Metro Manila but also in other urban areas, to ease the military pressure in Basilan and Sulu.

No money, man throws dead son into river

HE could not afford burial expenses for his dead new-born son. So a poor father from Tondo came up with what he must've thought was a convenient solution: He threw the boy's body into the river.

Police were yesterday seeking out suspect Rolando Villorente, 38, a resident of Bagong Palengke, Juan Luna Street, Tondo. He's facing charges of desecration of the dead.

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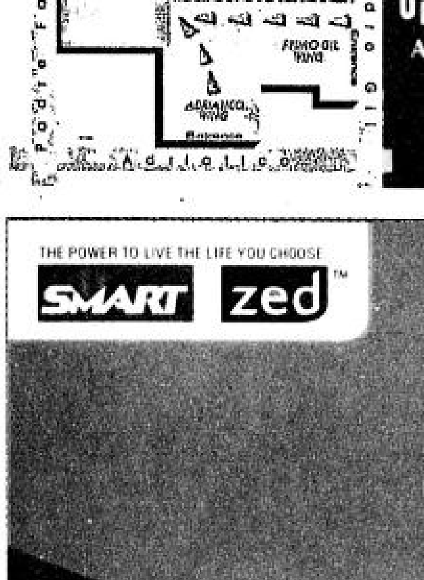

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MEHAN CONFLICT

Loren, Lito looking for solution

BY JEROME ANING

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday stood firm on the transfer of the City College of Manila to the historic Mehan Garden, even as he allayed Sen. Loren Legarda's fears about the damage to the environment and historical value that the relocation might cause.

Atienza, together with city officials, brought Legarda to the garden, located north of City Hall, for an inspection and tour yesterday afternoon. The senator was accompanied by members of the Heritage Conservation Society, one of the major critics of the transfer.

Legarda clarified that she is not at all opposed to the school's relocation. She said that she quite understands the CCM's desire to look for a new campus for its 6,000 students.

About 50 CCM students also held a brief dialogue with the senator in the park.

"We don't want to wait for an intensity 8 or 9 earthquake to strike in our school," they said in a letter of appeal to the senator, referring to the old Philippine National Bank building on Escolta Street, Sta. Cruz, that houses the CCM.

Atienza said the trees that would be affected by the erection of two buildings would be replanted elsewhere.

The students, meanwhile, promised to plant more trees in the park.

The senator also asked that Atienza must keep in mind the historical and cultural value of the place. She stressed that the park has been classified as a historical site by the National Historical Institute and an archeological site by the National Museum, after centuries-old pottery shards were dug from the area.

She cited Presidential Decrees 260 and 1605 which prohibits any person from modifying, altering, repairing or destroying the original features of any national shrine, monument, landmark and other important historical edifices declared and classified as such by the National Historical Institute without permission from the NHI chair.

LEGARDA

ATIENZA

The mayor refused to debate further with the senator but he promised to coordinate with the NHI, look into the two decrees and act speedily on the matter after consulting his advisers.

Legarda also offered to mediate between the mayor and the HCS and other groups opposed to the transfer.

"History, education and environment should not be in conflict with one another," she said.

HCS architectural coordinator Carlos Celdran also said the group is not opposing the transfer. But he said there should be a "visionary plan" that would retain the beauty and heritage of Mehan.

"The archeological research could go on and a museum could be built in the college to house the artifacts that will be found," Celdran said.

The mayor argued that the construction of the new campus would in fact enhance the Mehan Garden. He also called "misinformation" the senator's and HCS members' queries about a mall being built on the site.

Atienza said the garden has lost its historical value due to neglect. He said that very few people have been visiting the park.

"Human activity is important in maintaining a place's historical and cultural value," he said. "Many of the critics haven't even set foot on the park."

The park, then known as the Jardin Botanico, was the first zoological and botanical garden established in Manila in 1858. In 1913, it was renamed after the American chief of sanitation and park superintendent, John Mehan.

The walls of the garden were named after prominent Filipino and foreign scientists. A historical marker, now missing, was also installed in the site by the NHI.

In the pre-war years, Atienza recounted, numerous establishments have been erected on the site, among them the buildings of the Manila Science High School and the Roxas High School, Metrobank office and an African zoo.

"The concerns (of the project's critics) are genuine, so we will work with them," the mayor said. "But it's important that the project pushes through."

METROWATCH

Student yields shabu, grenade

MEDICINE student Michael Paul Dela Torre, who beat a red light in Tondo Manila before dawn yesterday, is in deeper trouble after police found him possessing a sachet of shabu and a hand grenade.

Supt. Romulo Sapitula of the Western Police District said Dela Torre, of 120 J. De Mesa St. in San Juan, a graduating student at the University of Perpetual Help in Biñan, Laguna, was driving a silver gray Opel Pecta (WGF-188) along Jose Abad Santos Avenue about 4:30 a.m. when stopped by mobile police for beating a red light at the intersection of Jose Abad Santos and Hermosa Street. PO3 Orlando Senal and PO2 Roderick Rubio said Dela Torre appeared nervous when they approached him and asked for his driver's license. Police said a plastic sachet apparently containing shabu fell from Dela Torre's wallet when he pulled out his license. Police immediately arrested Dela Torre and inspected his car. They found a grenade inside a black belt bag near the driver's seat. Dela Torre could not explain what the grenade was for. He was later turned over to the WPD's drug enforcement unit and has been charged with drug possession and illegal possession of explosive before the city prosecutor's office. Jerome Aning

Fugitive falls

FISH vendor Jose de Paz, 36, who bolted jail on Nov. 3, 1996 three months before his scheduled release, was arrested after his 13-year-old stepdaughter accused him of raping her on different occasions in Caloocan City. De Paz was arrested on Tuesday after his stepdaughter filed a rape complaint against him before the Caloocan Women's and Children's Concern Desk. In her sworn statement, the girl accused De Paz of raping her whenever they were left alone in the house. She said De Paz last raped her last December. *Christian V. Esguerra*

Hunt on for driver

MEMBERS of the Central Police District (CPD) are hunting down a Jell Bus Transit driver after he allegedly shot in the neck vendor Bartoloy F. Mendoza, of No. 7 Empire Subdivision in Barangay Payatas, Quezon City, in front of the East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC), said investigator SPO4 Rex Resurreccion, of the Kamuning police station. Mendoza described the suspect as fat, brown complexioned, about 35-years-old and 5'2" tall. Police said Mendoza had just arrived in front of the EAMC when the bus passed by. The vendor told police that he saw several men stone the bus forcing it to stop. Mendoza said some of the passengers got out of the bus and one of them punched him, apparently mistaking him to be the one who threw stones at the bus. Mendoza said that the driver then pointed a gun at him and shot him. He said the driver then boarded the bus and drove off toward Edsa. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Robbers strike anew

FOUR men riding motorcycles yesterday held up businessman Roberto Chua Lantin, 68, of 34 Calbayog St. in Mandaluyong City and his daughter Dr. Ruby Lantin-Tan of P500,000 they had just withdrawn from a branch of the Bank of the Philippine Islands in Quezon City. Chua and his daughter, the company doctor of GMA Channel 7, were in an olive green Toyota Corolla (PSZ-511) when the robbers struck, said desk officer SPO4 Edmund Senido of the Kamuning police station. Lantin said he withdrew the money for the payroll of his workers at Lantin Steel at 269 Quirino Highway in Novaliches, Quezon City. Lantin's daughter also lost P2,000 cash and several credit cards, police said. Lantin was driving at the corner of Edsa and Scout Borromeo to bring his daughter to the GMA building on Edsa when the robbers struck, police said. The robbers, who were armed with .45 guns and riding two motorcycles, blocked their path about 1:30 p.m. yesterday, police said. The suspects fled after taking the money. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Rug maker caught

CALOOCAN Ppolice arrested rug maker Esyo Neron for alleged possession of illegal drugs. Neron identified himself as a nephew of Valenzuela Police chief Supt. Nemesio Neron. Superintendent Neron, however, denied any relation to the suspect. PO2 Mel Reyes, PO2 Ariel Mercado, and PO1 Jasper Gaton accosted Neron about 5 p.m. near the corner of Zapote and Mariano Ponce streets after they noticed a knife sticking out of his belt. Neron was on a red Honda motorcycle driven by Calixto Jimenez, 33. Police inspected Neron's blue belt bag and found two plastic sachets believed to contain methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu, aluminum foil, and a lighter. Neron claimed a certain Joy had asked him to buy the shabu. Neron is now detained at the Caloocan Police Station 2 and facing charges of possession of prohibited drugs and deadly weapon before the city prosecutor's office. *Christian V. Esguerra*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, June 22, 2001
Sacred Heart of Jesus

1st Reading:	**Ezk 34:11-16**
2nd Reading:	**Rom 5:5-11**
Gospel:	**Lk 15:3-7**

Jesus told them this parable, "Who among you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and seek out the lost one till he finds it? And finding it, will he not joyfully carry it home on his shoulders? Then he will call his friends and neighbors together and say: 'Celebrate with me for I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you, just so, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine upright who do not need to repent."

Commentary:

God's love for his people was already apparent in the Old Testament symbolized by the imagery of the shepherd. When Jesus spoke this parable people knew that he referred to the infinite love that God had for them. Unlike people, with God's infinite love, numbers do not matter. For God, everyone is special and everyone is important. The shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep in the wilderness to save one single sheep that got lost. This is divine logic. Jesus himself goes even further than the shepherd in the parable. He took on himself the role of the Good Shepherd and gave his life for the sheep.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the love you showed in Jesus Christ. We ask you to make us also like good shepherds, sensitive to the needs of others.

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MMDA joins drive against criminality

BY NELSON F. FLORES

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority will help the Philippine National Police in monitoring the movements of criminal elements in Metro Manila.

Benjamin Abalos Sr., MMDA chair, yesterday said the move was in line with the agency's mandate to promote development.

This developed following reports of criminal activities in Metro Manila which, Abalos said, threaten development programs in the metropolis.

Abalos added that criminality, particularly kidnapping, scares potential investors and greatly affects commercial growth in Metro Manila.

Abalos said he recently gave instructions to all traffic enforcers and metro aides to report to their superiors any suspicious looking character in their areas of responsibility.

"In the absence of their supervisors, these MMDA personnel can directly report their sightings to the police or proper authorities," Abalos said.

Abalos said that, since MMDA personnel spends much of their time in the streets, they are in a position to notice any suspicious movement

He added that MMDA field personnel could help solve the manpower problems of the PNP and thereby increase their potential to fight criminal elements.

Killing of UST student could yet kill ROTC

BY ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

TO the family of University of Sto. Tomas student Mark Chua, his death could be the most painful event of their lives.

But the grief of one family may yet lead to a significant reform in an otherwise "irrelevant" course in the academic curriculum.

Several youth groups yesterday supported calls for the abolition of the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) earlier made by administrators of major universities in Metro Manila following the death of Chua.

The UST student was killed shortly after he exposed alleged anomalies in the ROTC. Erring officers of the UST-ROTC were believed to be behind Chua's death.

"This is not just about Mark Chua but more on the abolition of a course that breeds human rights violations and corruption," said Eman Hizon, chair of the Movement for the Advancement of Student Power, one of the groups that spearhead the abolition campaign.

ABOLISH ROTC NOW!
ABOLISH ROTC NOW!
ABOLISH ROTC NOW!

EDWIN BACASMAS

CLAMOR for ROTC mounts with protest of Akbayan Youth group.

Next week, MASP, along with Akbayan Youth and other youth organizations, will launch a one-million signature campaign to push for an executive intervention on the issue.

The collected signatures would be presented to the 12th Congress in time for the President's first State of the Nation Address in July.

"We are appealing to President Macapagal-Arroyo to listen to the growing clamor not only of students but also of school administrators to abolish ROTC," said Akbayan Youth coordinator Jonas Bagas.

He said that, while youth groups recognize the fact that ROTC is the bastion of national defense and that bulk of the country's national reserve commands come from its graduates, it did not serve its purpose of supposedly inculcating patriotism and nationalism.

Instead, Bagas said the ROTC developed a culture of violence, corruption and a wrong notion of leadership.

He cited, for instance, the training for ROTC officers where aspirants are reportedly being subjected to physical and psychological abuses.

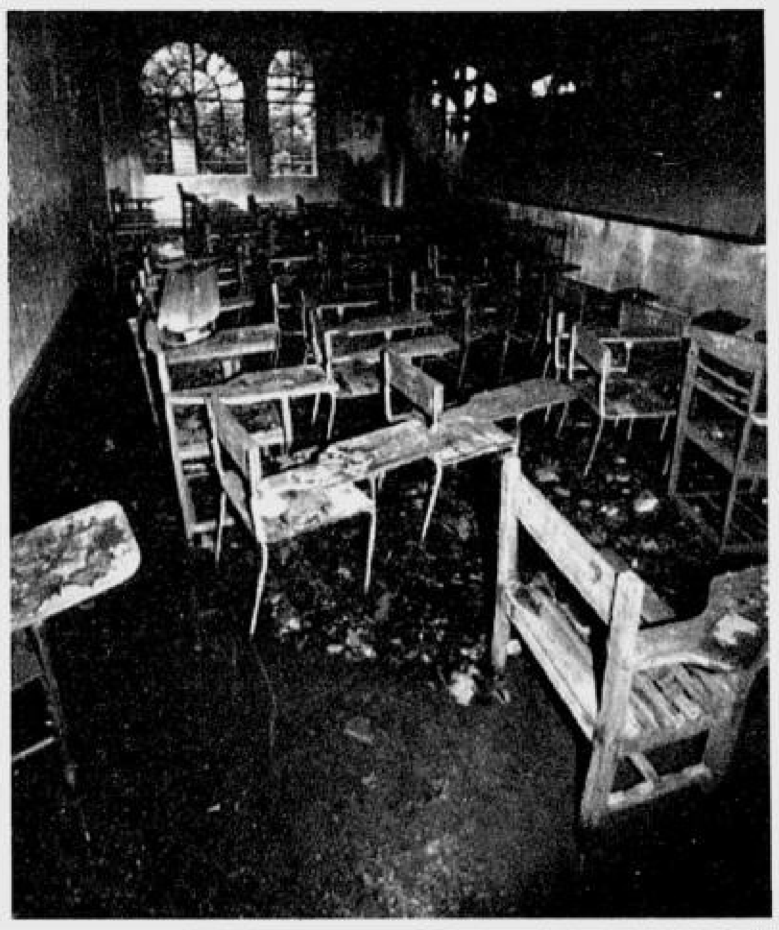
Hizon said they received reports that hazing is also rampant in training courses.

In a press conference in Quezon City yesterday, convenors of the Student Council Alliance of the Philippines said that, aside from the signature campaign to be launched nationwide, they would also hold discussions and debates on the issue.

Aside from the abolition of the ROTC course in the college curriculum, the youth groups also pushed for the investigation of alleged malpractice, abuses and corruption in the ROTC program.

AFTER THE BLAZE

CHARRED chairs and gutted rooms are what remain of at least 26 rooms of the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the Technological Institute of the Philippines in Ermita, Manila after a two-and-a-half hour fire yesterday gutted the building. The blaze, which started at 1:22 a.m. at the second floor of the building, destroyed some P15 million worth of property. Witnesses said a weak explosion from the building was heard before the fire broke out. Fire investigators are looking at the possibility that the blaze was caused by a faulty electric circuit or by an incendiary reaction at the school's laboratory. School officials have implemented emergency reconditioning of the classrooms for classes to resume as soon as possible. So far, only classes in technical courses would resume today. The rest of the classes would resume on Monday. *Jerome Aning*



Mayor Jinggoy 'passes the ball' to JV

By Agnes Donato

OUTGOING San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada wants his half brother and successor Joseph Victor JV Ejercito to continue his unfinished projects when the mayor-elect assumes office on July 1.

Estrada, who was given five days of temporary freedom to clear his desk at the municipal hall, expressed hope that the incoming mayor would finish the projects which he failed to complete during his nine years as chief executive of San Juan.

"I would advise him (JV) to focus on upgrading the standard of living of the poor people in San Juan," said Estrada, who is facing plunder charges along with his father, former President Joseph Estrada.

The young Estrada cited as his top accomplishment during his three terms as mayor the construction of the San Juan Medical Center beside the municipal hall.

He said he was also able to transform San Juan into a peaceful and "drug-free" town.

"I have also addressed the problems of youth by providing them education and improved health services for the underprivileged sector in San Juan," Estrada said.

However, there's one nagging problem confronting the municipal government. This is the refusal of Agora market vendors to transfer to the basement of the new mall that has been built for them.

The vendors, who have relocated to a temporary public market beside the municipal hall after a big fire hit the old Agora market in December 1998, claimed that the new market site was not safe and not viable to doing business.

On Wednesday afternoon, Estrada was able to meet with only about 10 market vendors, after the officers of the Samahan ng Manininda ng Pamilihang Agora declined the invitation for a dialogue.

During the meeting, Estrada told the vendors that the municipal government could not give in to their request to accommodate them on the ground floor. The outgoing mayor explained that having a wet market on the ground floor was not feasible, considering the stench it would cause.

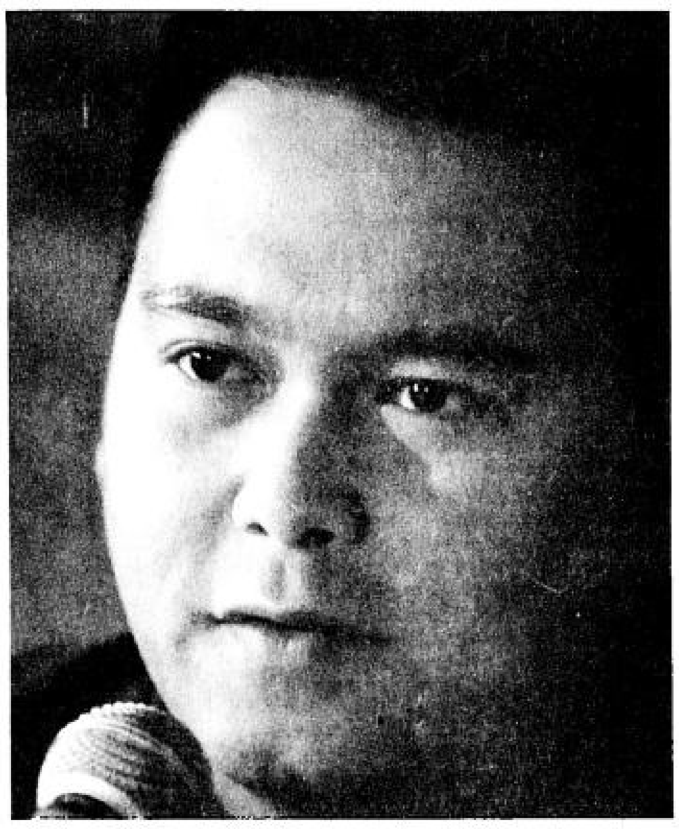
The vendors, however, expressed disappointment that they would not be able to show the mayor the actual condition of the basement and the stalls.

The Sandiganbayan earlier stressed that Estrada's movements would be strictly limited between his residence in North Greenhills and the municipal hall.

"How can the mayor be of help to us when he can't even go out and inspect the place?" a vendor said. He claimed that Estrada would not really be violating the conditions of his temporary liberty, since the market is within the municipal compound.

As things stand in San Juan, together with the mayorship, JV Ejercito will also be inheriting some outstanding problems from his half-brother who, ironically, has even bigger troubles to tackle.

JINGGOY ESTRADA



JV ESTRADA

Can these sob stories touch the PLDT mogul?

By Rocky Nazareno

IT'S a dark dead-end for fired PLDT employee Annabel Barrios & her kids.

JESS YUSON

FOR ANNABEL Barrios, death may have come at dusk on Jan. 12, 1999.

For the 40-year-old single parent to three children, the death knell came in the form of a gentle tap on her shoulder by a supervisor at the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. about 6 p.m. that day. She was being summoned to the office of the manager.

The supposed death certificate came in the form of an order terminating her services after more than 12 years with the telecommunication giant.

"You might as well have snuffed out the breath from me and my children when you gave me this letter," Barrios told her manager.

Barrios was one of 56 PLDT rank-and-file employees fired on that day.

Among those terminated was Ojie Dela Cruz, who was with the purchasing department of PLDT Mandaluyong.

"It was more a blow to my honor that I, now more than 40 years old, was now without a job," Dela Cruz said.

"It's like heaven and earth came down on me," Barrios told the Inquirer.

The stories of Barrios and Dela Cruz are duplicated in the case of the 54 others who have gone without work for the last 29 months despite having the proper qualifications.

Worse, the National Labor Relations Commission recently ruled with finality on their illegal dismissal case.

The NLRC favored PLDT and declared that the 1992 strike the workers had joined was illegal.

To appeals court

Of course, the dismissed employees could still go to the Court of Appeals to challenge the NLRC decision.

But Dela Cruz, the dismissed group's spokesman, fears the CA proceedings could only drag on and he claims not many of his colleagues can hang on.

"I've heard sad and desperate stories from my colleagues," Dela Cruz said.

One sob story is that of Barrios.

Barrios had been earning P20,000 a month, which was boosted by the overtime work of 50 to 60 hours that she had put in every 15 days.

"I earned as much as P30,000 a month from all the hard work I did for PLDT," she said.

Whatever she earned was just enough to pay for a housing loan, the school expenses of her children and ever-increasing household needs.

Barrios remembered how she got dazed after she was given her pink slip. She was so shaken, she said, that she did not know if she could make it home to her kids.

"I did not have any savings, I was paying for the loan, and I had credit cards to pay," she said. "All this raced through my mind."

Initially, she had her siblings to turn to.

Her parents were only relying on their pension and could hardly help.

Former colleagues at PLDT Sampaloc regularly passed the hat to help her out.

But not all these aids were enough to stem the tide of bills, promissory notes and mounting interest on the housing loan from Pag-IBIG fund.

Deathly ordeal

Barrios cried unabashedly as she recounted her daily ordeal in bringing her kids to school.

"I would bring them to school with only one-way fare. I couldn't go home anymore."

She goes to relatives and friends who would lend or give her enough to enable her to fetch her children in the afternoon for the trip home.

She weeps each time she gives her children P10 each for their daily allowance. She used to give them P100 daily when she was still employed.

"My heart bleeds each time my kids ask for a sandwich, a candy or a toy and all I can tell them is that we do not have any money," she said.

Barrios, like her fellow dismissed employees, wants to land another job. But being 40 years old and carrying the stigma of being dismissed from PLDT for a union activity has kept the doors of prospective employers closed.

"(Prospective employers) wouldn't want to touch us with a 10-foot pole. Once they learn that we were dismissed, they would turn us down."

Dela Cruz said he tried not to disclose his termination from PLDT when he applied with a telecom company.

"But when they double-checked with PLDT, they found out about the truth and they told me they would just call me," he said. "They never did"

For all their sufferings, Dela Cruz, Barrios and the 54 other dismissed employees are not blaming PLDT president Manuel V. Pangilinan.

"After all, Mr. Pangilinan came to PLDT only recently," Barrios said. "Still, we hope and pray he looks into our case."

NBI hunting H-World brass who duped war veterans

By Jerome Aning

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is tracking a bogus pension scheme syndicate reportedly headed by an official of the controversial "H-World" organization, and which had already duped thousands of pesos from 4,200 war veterans and farmers in Cagayan.

Representatives of the complainants, who had trooped to the NBI headquarters in Manila, identified the head of the syndicate as one Rene Siquiran, 60, of Parañaque City, reportedly an official of the controversial H-World.

Teresita Dimaandar, the group's spokesperson, said they encountered the suspect while the latter was trying to sell his Pastrana Foundation—which he claimed was connected to the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) and Social Security Service—to prospects in Tuguegarao City and other Cagayan towns last year.

Dimaandar added that Siquiran promised to include them in the list of the foundation's beneficiaries but they should first pay him P3,500 a month for a period of one year, after which they will be given P10,000 to P15,000 in monthly pensions.

Using his glib tongue, the suspect was able to win the confidence of the victims whose ages ranged from 60 to 70 years old.

Most of the victims, Dimaandar said, even resorted to selling their livestock, land and other valuables just to meet the suspect's conditions.

The victims, however, became suspicious when Siquiran failed to give them their pensions and resorted to delaying tactics, usually by promising them that the money would be available next month.

Finally growing tired of Siquiran's promises, the victims tried to get their money back, only to find out that the suspect and his staff had already vanished from his Tuguegarao office.

They then decided to seek the NBI's assistance.

No money . . .

(From page A25)

The baby, with a tag bearing the name "Baby Boy Pioquinto," after Villorente's live-in wife, was discovered floating along the northern banks of the Pasig River off Area C. Parola Compound, Binondo at around 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

The day-old baby, wearing white pampers and wrapped in a green linen cloth, was placed inside a brown cigarette box, according to investigators.

SPO3 Ernesto Jose Jr. said Villorente's wife gave birth to a dead child at the Gat Andres Bonifacio Memorial Medical Center Wednesday morning. At around 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, the suspect claimed the body and even lamented that he could not afford funeral expenses for his son.

Medical staff interviewed by the police said they advised Villorente to go to City Hall and avail of pauper's burial in one of the government-owned cemeteries.

Jerome Aning

Pasig poor to GMA: Fulfill your promise

PRESIDENT mingling with the masses.

By Agnes E. Donato

POOR residents in Pasig City on Wednesday made an urgent plea to President Macapagal-Arroyo to make good on her promise to grant them the public land they are occupying at the MRR (Manila Railroad) property in Barangay Pineda.

The residents are concerned the local government under outgoing Mayor Vicente Eusebio might undermine the promise of land which President Macapagal made to the urban poor, according to Alberto Portugues, an officer of the MRR-Pineda Homeowners Association.

"We challenge the Arroyo administration and the housing agencies to prove its sincerity and fulfill their promises to the poor," Portugues said.

Residents claimed the local government is also interested in putting up medium-rise housing units on the same property for city government employees and public school teachers.

This would mean eviction of the squatters now occupying the land and the demolition of their houses, without local government's assurance that they would be accommodated in the housing project once it is completed, Portugues said.

Portugues said that because of the city administration's non-committal response to the squatters, he and other residents had no choice but to refuse local government's proposal to set up a housing project on MRR-Pineda.

Already, residents claimed they are being harassed by their barangay captain, Jaime de Leon, who is allegedly pushing for Eusebio's plan to set up a housing project on MRR-Pineda.

Gregorio "Totong" Parandas, homeowners association president, told the Pasig police that although he and De Leon had never quarreled over anything before, the barangay captain began to threaten him and other residents when President Macapagal signed the directive allowing the squatters to stay on in the area.

Incoming Pasig Mayor Soledad Eusebio, wife of the incumbent, also strongly supports the proposed housing project, citing it would partly solve the city's housing problem.

In March, President Macapagal visited the MRR-Pineda community and signed a directive declaring the public land as a housing site for the squatters under the Zonal Improvement Program of the National Housing Authority.

But Portugues said the estimated 600 families living in the area have yet to receive the land titles.

The urban poor group also asked Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael Defensor to speed up the release of the proclamation order on the land.

Kilosbayan forum

SEN. Juan M. Flavier and Prof. Felipe B. Miranda of Pulse Asia will be the guest speakers of Kilosbayan at its weekly forum today at 2 p.m. at Shalom Center at 1660 LM Guerrero St., Malate Manila.

Flavier will give his "Post-Election Thoughts and Reflections" while Miranda will present his "Analysis of the May 14, 2001 Elections."

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Conspiracy—Well-settled is the rule that "conspiracy exists when two or more persons come to an agreement concerning the commission of a felony and decide to commit it. The agreement to commit a crime may be deduced from the mode and manner of the commission of the offense or inferred from the acts that point to joint purpose and design, concerted action and community of intent." It is sufficient that at the time of the aggression, all the accused manifested by their acts, a common intent or desire to attack so that the act of one accused becomes the act of all. In the present case, unity of design or objective can easily be inferred from the concerted acts of the three accused. Their conspiracy is evident, notwithstanding the accused-appellant's claim that he did not do anything to the victim. It must be remembered that in conspiracy, evidence need not establish the actual agreement among the conspirators showing a preconceived plan or motive for the commission of the crime. Proof of concerted action before, during and after the crime, which demonstrates their unity of design and objective, is sufficient. Thus, having shown that the three accused were in conspiracy thru their concerted acts, there is collective criminal responsibility since "all the conspirators are liable as principals regardless of the extent and character of their participation, because the act of one is the act of all." [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, People v. Bulur, Jr., G.R. No. 125306, December 11, 2000]

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Lyn Ching sets the record straight

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

GMA 7's well-loved host **Lyn Ching** is hardly the subject of gossip or nasty talks. But when she said goodbye on the show biz-oriented show, "S-Files" last Sunday, Lyn suddenly created a stir. There have been endless speculations on the actual reason of her resignation. Now, Lyn wants to set the record straight.

We caught Lyn on her mobile phone last Wednesday afternoon as she was about to go malling. She gladly obliged to a short interview and said that she really wants to end all speculations on why she gave up "S-Files."

"I've always said, not once, not twice, but a number of times, that I wanted to go back to news and public affairs," she explains. "I want to get serious again and I want to do the news. That's where I'm most comfortable at."

Lyn points out her intention of going back to the news had always been there. She started out as a field reporter on GMA and later became a news anchor.

"It's just that I can't go back just like that after I was asked to host 'S-Files,'" she says. "I had to do it gradually, so I joined 'Unang Hirit' first."

When she returned from the States after interviewing **David Duchovny** for the Hollywood film "Evolution," Lyn was decided to make the move.

"My bosses, especially **Bobby Barreiro**, were so supportive of my decision," she discloses. "The challenge is different when you do the news. I believe it was time to re-evaluate where I really want to go and what I want to do. I'm not getting any younger."

Lyn is aware she will miss the people behind "S-Files," which she hosted with **Paolo Bediones**. And although there is no specific show lined up for her in the news and public affairs department, Lyn simply wants to work.

She is biding her time and enjoys her daily, early morning stint on "Unang Hirit," where she basks on the camaraderie of the gang.

"It's fun to work when you see your friends and look forward to what you do every day," Lyn says. "With 'Unang Hirit,' it's never a burden to wake up early and go to the studio."

Apparently, Lyn is happy where she is now. The purveyors of intrigue can simply shut up and leave her alone.

Janice takes over

STARTING this Sunday, **Janice de Belen** takes over from Lyn's hosting chores in "S-Files." The program is not really new to Janice because she was Lyn's pinch-hitter when the latter was in the US for an extended vacation in San Francisco after her Duchovny interview in Los Angeles.

"S-Files" is also undergoing a reformat starting this week, so the Sunday afternoon show wants to make sure that viewers will tune in.

One thing to look forward to is Janice's one-on-one interview with **Aga Muhlach**, the father of her 13-year-old son, **Igi Boy**, in her segment, "Straight from Janice." Aga is expected to clear all issues and controversies concerning his recent wedding to **Charlene Gonzales** and his reported rift with his aunt **Amalia Fuentes**.

The interview will be taped tomorrow afternoon at the Sampaguita Studios in Quezon City.

Perhaps more than the topics that will be talked about, viewers will be more curious about how Janice and Aga will come face-to-face after more than a decade of not being seen together. It may still thrill some of their loyal fans, but what's nice about it is that they can now have a good relationship as friends.

Another new addition to "S-Files" is **Joji Dingcong**, talent manager to such stars as **Martin Nievera, Ian Veneracion** and **Cogie Domingo**. Joji faces the industry's toughest intrigues in his own segment which tackles explosive issues.

For its reformat, "S-Files" will introduce segments that will keep viewers from switching channels.

Natural rapport

THE FEW times I wake up early and turn on my TV to watch the morning programs, I never fail to admire the natural rapport of the hosts of "Unang Hirit." They joke in front of the cameras, giggle and poke fun at each other, letting out contagious laughter.

"*Kami lang yata ang naka-ngiti o tumatawa ng alas-singko ng umaga,*" says **Arnold Clavio**.

The uncanny sincerity and pleasant camaraderie of the hosts are obviously never put on. As viewers notice, there's no effort to look sprightly in front of the camera. They are all animated and spontaneous even at sunrise.

"Unang Hirit" recently introduced a young trio of cohosts to join Arnold. Lyn Ching, **Martin Andanar, Miriam Quiambao** and **Suzi Entrata.**

The new batch is composed of **Rhea Santos, Ivan Mayrina** and **Hans Montenegro**.

CHING. Returns to news and public affairs.

The exit of host **Ryan Agoncillo** hardly affected the popularity of the show. Ryan moved to ABS-CBN, where he now hosts the daily morning show, "Talk TV." It's Hans Montenegro who took his place in "Unang Hirit."

"*Nalungkot kami* when Ryan left because he kept it from us," Arnold says. "He was the original morning guy. We were surprised when we learned about it, but we respect his decision."

With the new young hosts, however, Arnold believes "Unang Hirit" will now have a wider audience reach.

"We now cater to the children, the youth and the parents," he maintains.

Ivan and Rhea simply took their chance of joining "Unang Hirit" by applying as segment producers.

Rhea was then training with the morning show of the rival station when she learned about the opening on GMA last year.

"It's like typical job-hunting for me," Rhea offers. "I submitted my resumé and luckily, I got the job."

At about the same time, Ivan was working as a training officer for Ayala Corporation when he bumped into a college friend who told him about the job opening in "Unang Hirit."

Today, the two young hosts undoubtedly enjoy their new-found TV career.

"It's fun to be in a morning show," Rhea says. "Everyday, you look forward to doing it. Even if you don't want to wake up early, once you're there, the show keeps you alive."

Ivan adds: "You don't want to miss a day because seeing somebody else do your job, you kind of tell yourself, 'That should have been me.'"

The gang attests they are wackier off camera. On Saturdays, it's their bonding time when they play bowling at SM Megamall.

No wonder it's never an effort to look happy as a team when they face the cameras.

THE NEW hosts of GMA 7's morning show, "Unang Hirit:" (from left) Ivan Mayrina, Rhea Santos and Hans Montenegro.

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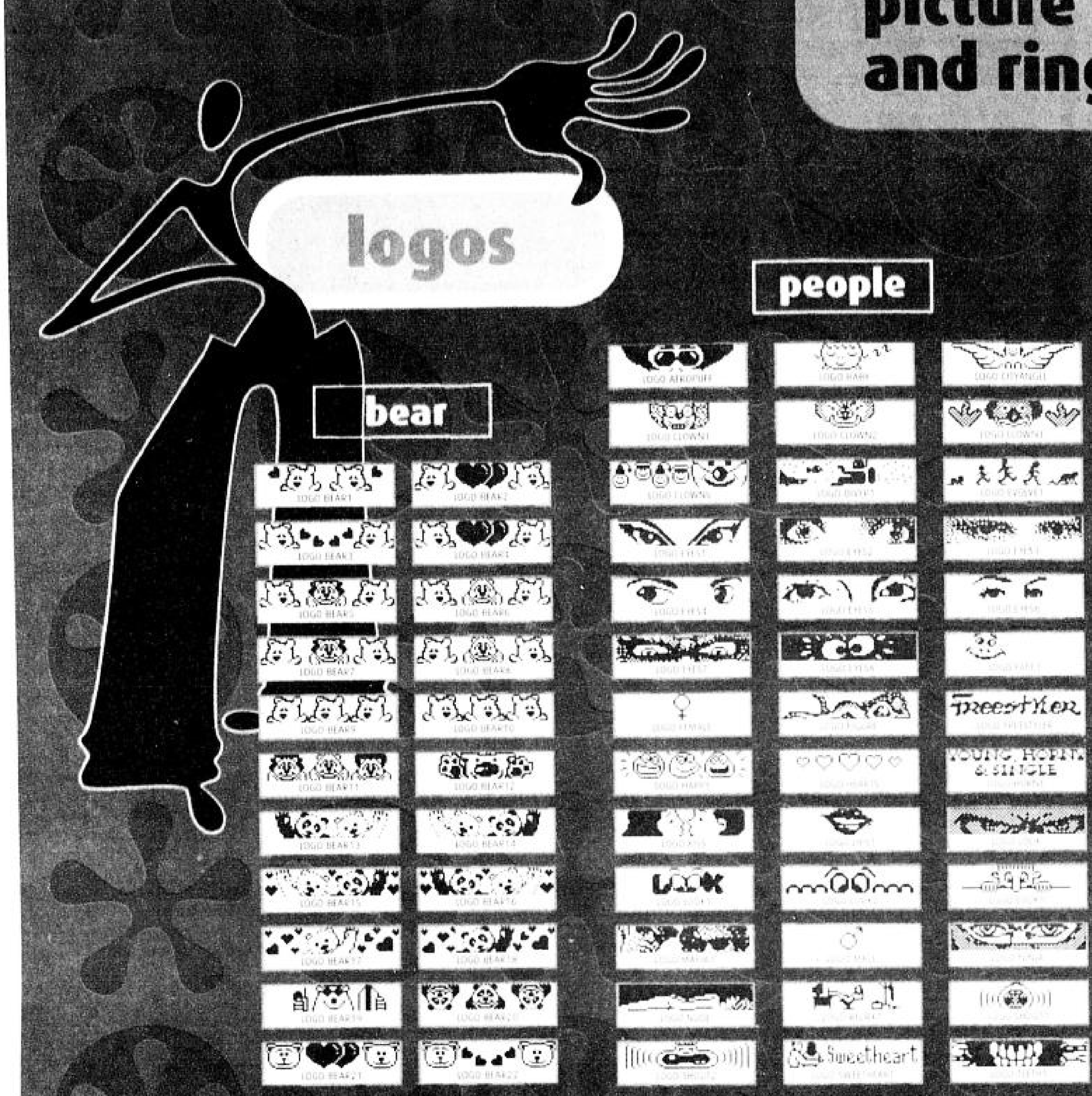
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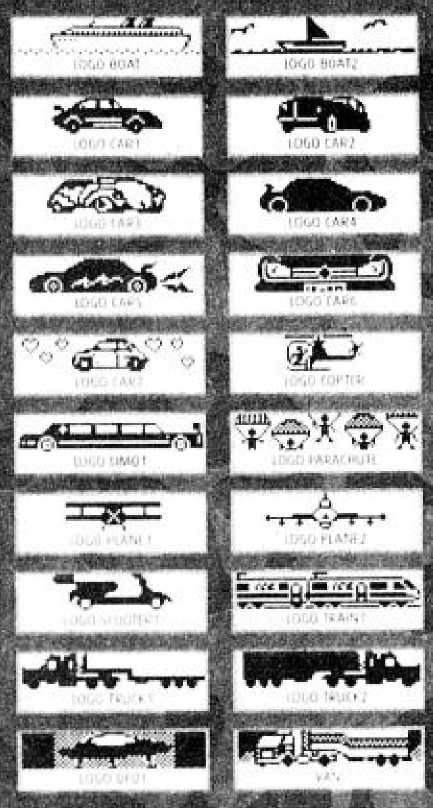

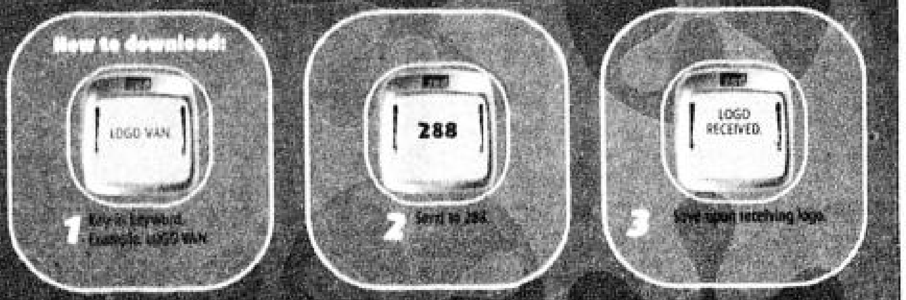
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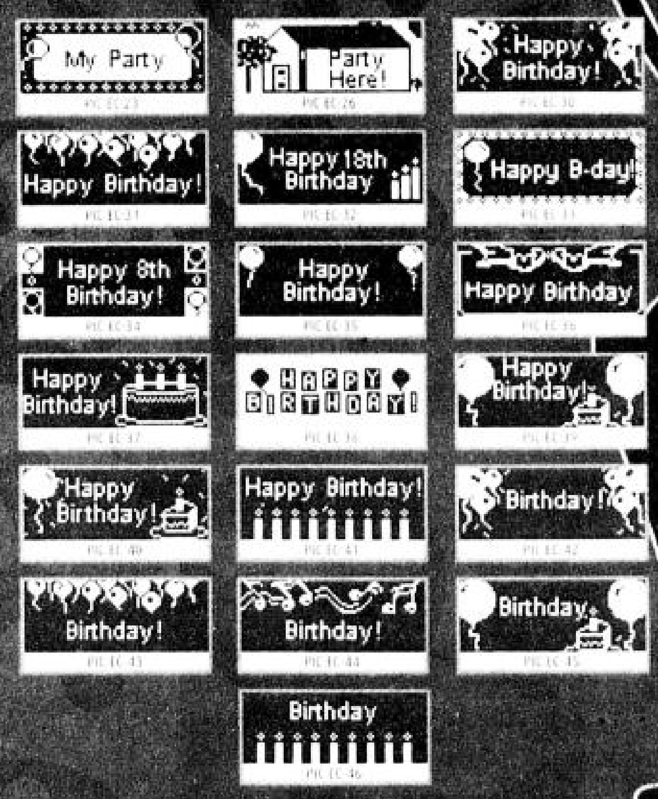
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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	EVOLUTION
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DR. T & THE WOMEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	THE REPLICANT
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ODEON	ACCIDENTAL SPY
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ROBEN	KASIBULAN
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ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
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REMAR	LUV TEXT
REMAR-2	MAGENTA
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CINEMA-3	MAGENTA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SPOT
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-7	LUV TEXT
CINEMA-8	THE REPLICANT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PEARL HARBOR
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CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	EVOLUTION
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LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-2	EVOLUTION
CINEMA-3	DR. T & THE WOMEN
CINEMA-4	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-5	HEAD OVER HEELS
CINEMA-6	EVOLUTION
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-2	HIYAS
CINEMA-4	DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-4	BUHAY NA MANIKIN

Aiza . . .

(From page A31)

the month.

Will wonders never cease? For natural, giving performers like Aiza Seguerra, we hope not!

'Labrador'

IN HIS latest film, "Labrador," **Lito Lapid** portrays a principled lawman who is framed by his own superior officer. Realizing that his life is in danger, he hides in a remote fishing village, where he assumes another identity.

In the peaceful seaside community, he chills out for a spell while reviewing his options before heading back for the big city, with all its dangers and stresses.

Little does he realize that there's trouble even in this little corner of Paradise: A group of wealthy investors is buying all the land around, preparatory to putting up a plush resort. And, if a landowner doesn't want to sell, the investors' goons force them out by any means possible.

As bad luck would have it, the family Lapid has befriended is pressured and assaulted by the goons, so he's compelled to come to their aid. All too soon, his peaceful hiatus is shattered, and he's back in fighting mode, fists flying, legs kicking and guns blazing!

As an action film, this production is par for the course, with Lapid once again defeating a veritable army of goons, all by his lonesome. It fares better in the drama department, with Lapid and his leading lady, **Isabel Granada**, turning in likable portrayals.

Granada is too *mestiza* to be credible as a village lass, but her performance is otherwise engaging. As for Lapid, he's sometimes able to rise above the "superhero" nature of his role, and comes across well in scenes where he doesn't have to resort to the same, old, improbable action routines and flourishes.

'Little Nicky'

HIS captivating voice and charming looks lured Drew Barrymore in the romantic film, "The Wedding Singer," while his fatherly charisma won over a cute, naughty boy in the heartwarming comedy, "Big Daddy."

Now, he's Satan's lovable kid on earth in the devilish comedy hit, "Little Nicky."

Hollywood actor-comedian Adam Sandler plays the lead as the youngest son of Satan who has the mind of a little boy.

"Little Nicky" is now released on video by C-Interactive Entertainment.

For inquiries, call 245-5011 to 12.

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Rustom wishes Carmina and Zoren long-lasting happiness

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

BY the time you read this, I'll be en route to New York City. But "America's Sweethearts" won't be shown in Manila until the middle of September so the interviews I'll be doing with **Julia Roberts, Catherine Zeta Jones** and company won't be airing until early September. I do promise to write about my insights about them as soon as I get back.

"Kris and Tell," the TV show has been very exhilarating for me. I get a high from shooting my features, regardless of how time-consuming they may be, because it's truly fun for me to get out of the studio and interact with my subjects in their personal settings. But it's in my one-on-one interviews that I get to explore the depths of the emotions of my subjects.

Sometimes I fear that because I do these emotionally probing interviews on a daily basis, I may become hardened and eventually uncaring. My one-on-one with **Rustom Padilla** changed all that.

We met at Blue Bacon and Green Eggs Wednesday last week. We aired the interview in two parts, last Friday and this past Monday.

I warned Rustom ahead of time that even if it was unintentional, almost everybody who sat opposite me got teary-eyed because of my relentless, although sympathetic probing.

Rustom bared his soul. I realized after that a person like him, and at this particular point of his life, is the best subject any host can hope for.

Rustom has survived much personal and professional heartache, and he's now very hopeful about his future because of the big break a Singaporean TV station has given him in the form of a two-year build-up contract.

There's a lot of pain from Rustom's past he has now come to terms with because the future is now bright. It is very easy to deal realistically with what has hurt you, when there's so much that gives you strength now.

Rumors

Rustom had a lot to say to refute rumors linking him to illegal drug use and the malicious and unfounded talks about him being gay. He answered all my queries with a refreshing candor. But it was his revelations about his family that struck a chord.

I came to know Rustom because of **Robin**. But I now appreciate Robin's generosity and selflessness because of what Rustom shared with me and my viewers.

After his split-up with **Carmina Villaroel**, Rustom almost lost his home since he was having trouble keeping up with mortgage payments. There was a point when he needed P900,000 to pay the bank or else he'd forfeit his home.

Robin, who had just been released from jail at that time, learned of his older brother's predicament and offered to share with Rustom the P1-million down payment he had received for a movie.

Robin, who also was just rebuilding his life after his prison term, kept just P100,000 and gave the rest to his brother with no hesitation.

Robin also had many obligations to settle at that time, but he didn't think twice in putting his brother's needs before his own.

I asked Rustom if he ever felt that because he was the least problematic son, his mother, Mommy **Eva Cariño**, failed to give him the attention and caring that she had given his other brothers.

Rustom readily admitted that it was only recently that he and his mom had talked about his needs, and he was able to tell her that he had been hurt in the past when he felt that he was low on her priority list. He pointed out to his mother that even though he was independent and would try to solve his problems on his own, it didn't mean that he didn't need her support and didn't crave for her loving comfort.

Reality

It was four years ago when Rustom and **Carmina Villaroel** parted ways. Rustom said that up until a couple of months before the time that Mina was due to give birth to her twins, he was still unable to surrender to the reality that there was no reconciliation for them in the near or distant future. He went to a psychologist for counselling to help him accept that it was truly over.

Rustom revealed that Mina called him up from the United States before she came home, late in January, seeking an assurance that he wouldn't pursue an adultery case against her. He said that he heard the babies crying in the background and it was for their sake he'd never do anything that would jeopardize their future.

He was honest enough to acknowledge that everybody is aware of that fact that he didn't grow up in a perfect family setting. His father had many partners and he has numerous half siblings. Growing up as he had, he realized that children should not be punished because of the circumstances of their birth.

What touched me deeply was Rustom's message for Carmina. I've been doing celebrity interviews for the past six years and I feel that I've developed enough instincts to distinguish sincerity from "playing to the camera" statements.

Rustom said that from his heart, he wished Mina and **Zoren (Legaspi**, the father of her twins) long-lasting happiness.

Rustom said that he knew Mina would be a very good mother because this has been her long-held wish. He said that he hoped if they bumped into each other, he and Mina would be able to have a good conversation and not feel uncomfortable in the presence of the other. Most of all Rustom said that he held a longing that in the few times that Mina may think of him, he hoped that she'd do so while smiling, because every time he thought of her, at this point, he can finally smile again.

Friendship

At that part of the interview I was shedding more tears than Rustom. Partly because I've maintained a friendship with both Rustom and Mina. I've witnessed the road of pain and surrender they've had to travel to get to where they both are now. Partly because I've also survived a painful break-up. What Rustom expressed in the interview echoes some of the lessons I've learned.

After all is said and done, when we aren't given the happily-ever-after we thought we'd have when we first fell in love, the best we can hope for is the ability to smile when we look back.

Once you've finally come to terms with all the bad and the sad that went on in the relationship, what you should be left holding on to are the memories of why you ever fell in love in the first place.

I'm not saying you should idealize your ex. That's foolish. What I'm saying is there is a point when there's no longer any reason to demonize him or her, either. Break-ups happen, period, the whys and hows do become redundant. A person you used to love is special. If they weren't, you'd never have fallen in love with them in the first place. That's a fact you accept after you've healed.

True to the song, no matter how much they once meant to you, the person is "only someone that you used to love." You'll never have that person in your life again, but you will always have your memories. And if memories of him or her can now make you smile, then you're very lucky because what you really had was love. And once you can smile again, you're now capable of loving again.

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PEARL HARBOR - P 13 11:30, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00	HEAD OVER HEELS - P 13 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20	EVOLUTION - P 13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

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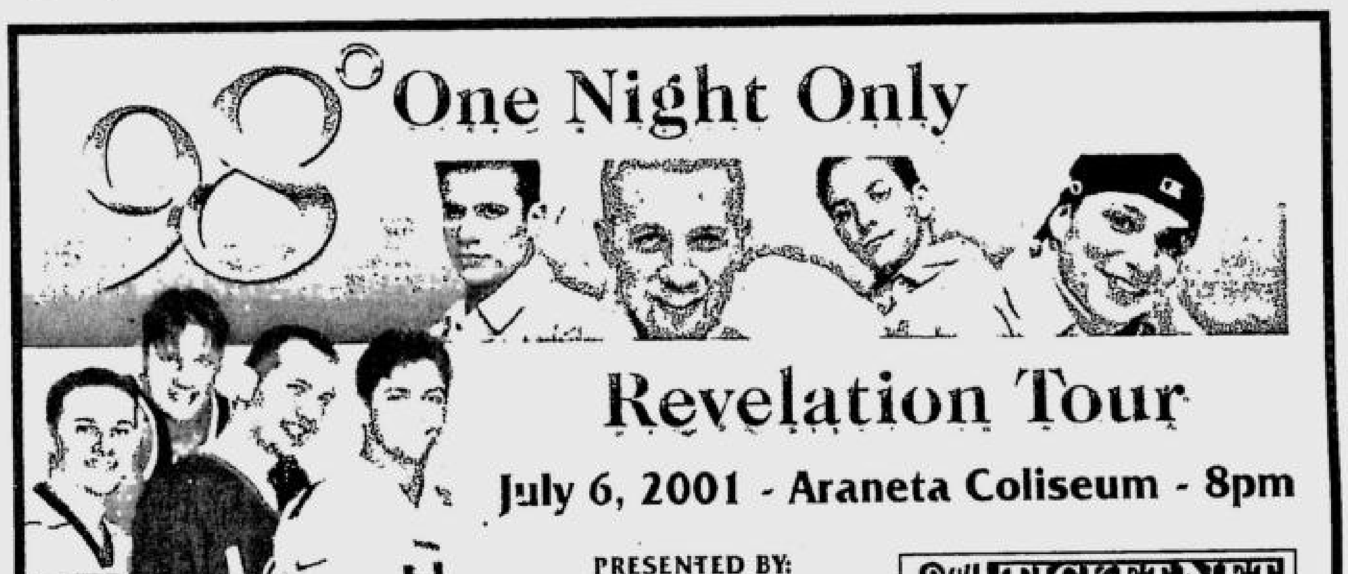

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Aiza reinvents herself as a singer

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE BIG news on the local recording scene is the outstanding success of **Aiza Seguerra**'s first album, which has hit platinum after only some weeks in the market.

It's a surprising development because Aiza hasn't been known as a singer. In addition, the songs in her album are generally simple, straightforward and no-frills numbers, and Aiza accompanies herself on acoustic guitar.

A number of people warned the former child superstar against taking such a quiet tack, but it looks like listeners love the album precisely because it provides a welcome alternative to the generally raucous and gimmick-oriented musical compilations being produced these days.

It's heartening to see that, despite our being faddish and trend-oriented, Aiza has succeeded as a new recording star by just being herself and singing the kinds of songs she likes, instead of the usual teen, "lollipop" ditties that make it big in these parts.

It appears that people respect Aiza's decision to be herself, and not get all gussied up in ruffles and bows or sexy outfits like many of today's female teen singers. It takes guts to buck the current trends and "packaging" styles, and that's what Aiza has, in heaps.

In addition, Aiza has a lot of carry-over goodwill from her TV-film child star days. Her fans are curious about her shift from acting to singing, and are buying her album to see how well she's been able to pull it off.

The album's brisk sales indicate that they think Aiza has more than passed muster in her latest show biz gambit.

Of course, now that her album has made her popular again, Aiza may again be getting TV-film acting offers from producers who like to latch onto the current flavor of

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DreamWorks Pictures

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In the tradition of MEN IN BLACK comes another funny, hip and special-effects-packed sci-fi comedy misadventure -- Columbia Pictures' EVOLUTION.

When a meteor crashes Earth carrying alien life forms, all hell wackily breaks loose.

David Duchovny (FBI Agent Mulder in X-FILES), Orlando Jones (BEDAZZLED), Seann William Scott (AMERICAN PIE) and two-time Oscar® nominee Julianne Moore (HANNIBAL) star as the only people standing between the aliens and world domination.

A team of visual effects wizards, led by Phil Tippett, worked with director Ivan Reitman (GHOSTBUSTERS) to design an ever-evolving assortment of alien creatures, which were then digitally rendered. Tippett created the dinosaurs in JURASSIC PARK and the giant alien insects in STARSHIP TROOPERS.

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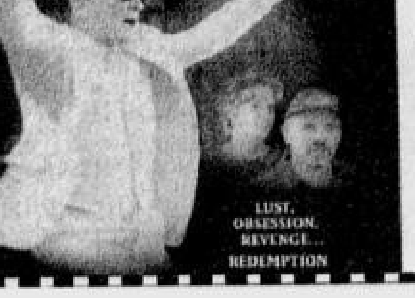

"TWO THUMBS UP! A TRIUMPH!"
ROBERT DUVALL THE APOSTLE
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THE APOSTLE
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Pepsico, San Miguel eye stake in Cosmos

By Doris C. Dumlao
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FOOD and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. is working out a deal with US-based PepsiCo Inc. for a strategic partnership in its profitable soft drink unit Cosmos Bottling Corp.

Industry sources yesterday told the Inquirer that after offering its cash cow to different groups—including San Miguel Corp. and Lucio Tan's Asia Brewery Inc.—the RFM group was now warming up to the idea of getting an additional investor instead.

But other sources insisted that a bidding war is bubbling between beverage giant San Miguel/Coca-Cola and Pepsico for control of Cosmos.

The sources said PepsiCo was willing to come in as a minority investor by buying some of the shares held by RFM and providing additional financial muscle in the future to sustain Cosmos' remarkable growth.

Negotiations have started without the involvement of PepsiCo's local licensee, Pepsi Cola Products Philippines Inc. (PCPPI), the sources said.

The sources said the direction was for PepsiCo to initially become a passive investor in Cosmos, with the PepsiCo-RFM partnership in Cosmos later launching a takeover bid on PCPPI.

Having declared that Cosmos was not for sale, the sources said RFM remained keen on selling only a portion of its 84.52-percent stake while maintaining its majority control of the company. RFM has declared that Cosmos would play a crucial role in its new strategy to focus on the refreshment business.

By selling a portion of Cosmos, the sources said RFM would be able to raise fresh funds to cover the bond redemption obligations it failed to meet last May 30 without having to give up control of its most profitable unit.

However, some sources said San Miguel-Coke still wanted no less than majority interest in Cosmos in keeping with San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.'s policy of investing only in companies where it would have management control and those which would enhance its dominance in a market.

With its 20- to 25-percent market share and extensive distribution network, Cosmos has emerged as a coveted target for both San Miguel-Coke and Pepsico.

For San Miguel-Coke, the acquisition of Cosmos would further tighten its grip on the local beverage market, one of the biggest in the world. CCBPI has a 65-percent share of the market, although this was sharply down from its peak of 80 percent.

But RFM reportedly wanted P16 billion (P5.91 per share) for its shares in Cosmos while San Miguel has offered to buy the shares at P12 billion or P4.15 per share. It remains to be seen whether San Miguel is willing to pay full price just to neutralize what is currently the biggest threat to its dominance in the market.

A high-ranking SMC official said the conglomerate had earlier looked into the possibility of buying Cosmos as the company was offered by the RFM group. However, the official noted that SMC was now instead keen on focusing its efforts on CCBPI.

In a separate interview, a high-ranking PCPPI official said that the local unit was advised by PepsiCo that Cosmos was up for grabs. The official confirmed that RFM was directly talking to the US-based bottler, noting that the local licensee did not have the money to pursue such an acquisition.

But the official said it remained to be seen whether it would be beneficial for PepsiCo over the long term to invest in a brand that would directly compete with its own.

Analysts said Cosmos, whose shares have been sharply rising in the stock market recently, was an attractive buy for any beverage group because of its robust growth during the last few years.

The price of Cosmos shares gained another 14 percent to close at P5.30 yesterday at the Philippine Stock Exchange from P4.65 on Wednesday. The shares are now trading above their book value of P1.99 each.

Catering to the lower end market segment, Cosmos' net income surged by 43 percent year-on-year to P211 million in the first quarter of the year on the back of a 28-percent improvement in net sales to P1.5 billion. It is now considered the second biggest soft drink bottler in the Philippines next to CCBPI.

RFM, for its part, is under pressure to raise funds to pay off redemption obligations from $65 million worth of bonds due last May 30. It had said it would need additional time to service the redemption payments for the convertible bonds because of a "temporary cash flow mismatch."

RFM said it would meet such obligations through a combination of funds from the sale of certain assets, new borrowings and from internally generated cash.

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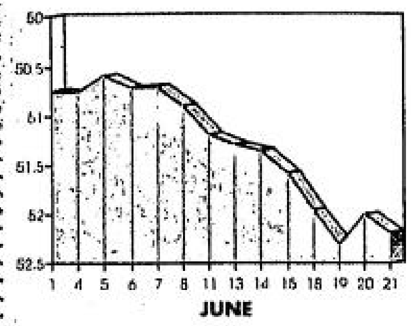


GRAPHS BY ROBERT E. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P52.20 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 21, 2001

¥123.92 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 123.92 as of 5 p.m., June 21, 2001

GOLD:$273.35/273.85

per ounce Hong Kong, June 21, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares end sharply lower

SHARES ended sharply lower yesterday on profit taking following recent gains, traders said.

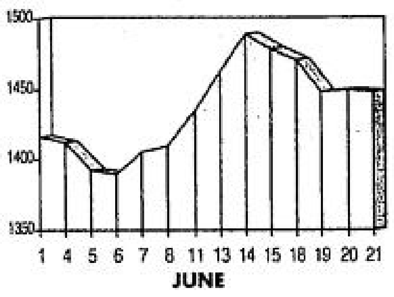
The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index broke its 1,450-point support to close down 22.19 points, or 1.5 percent, at 1,448.73, adding to Monday's 0.6-percent loss. Prior to the previous session's decline, the market gained 6.5 percent in six straight sessions.

"There should be a correction since the market has already gone up nearly 100 points since last Thursday," said Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas.

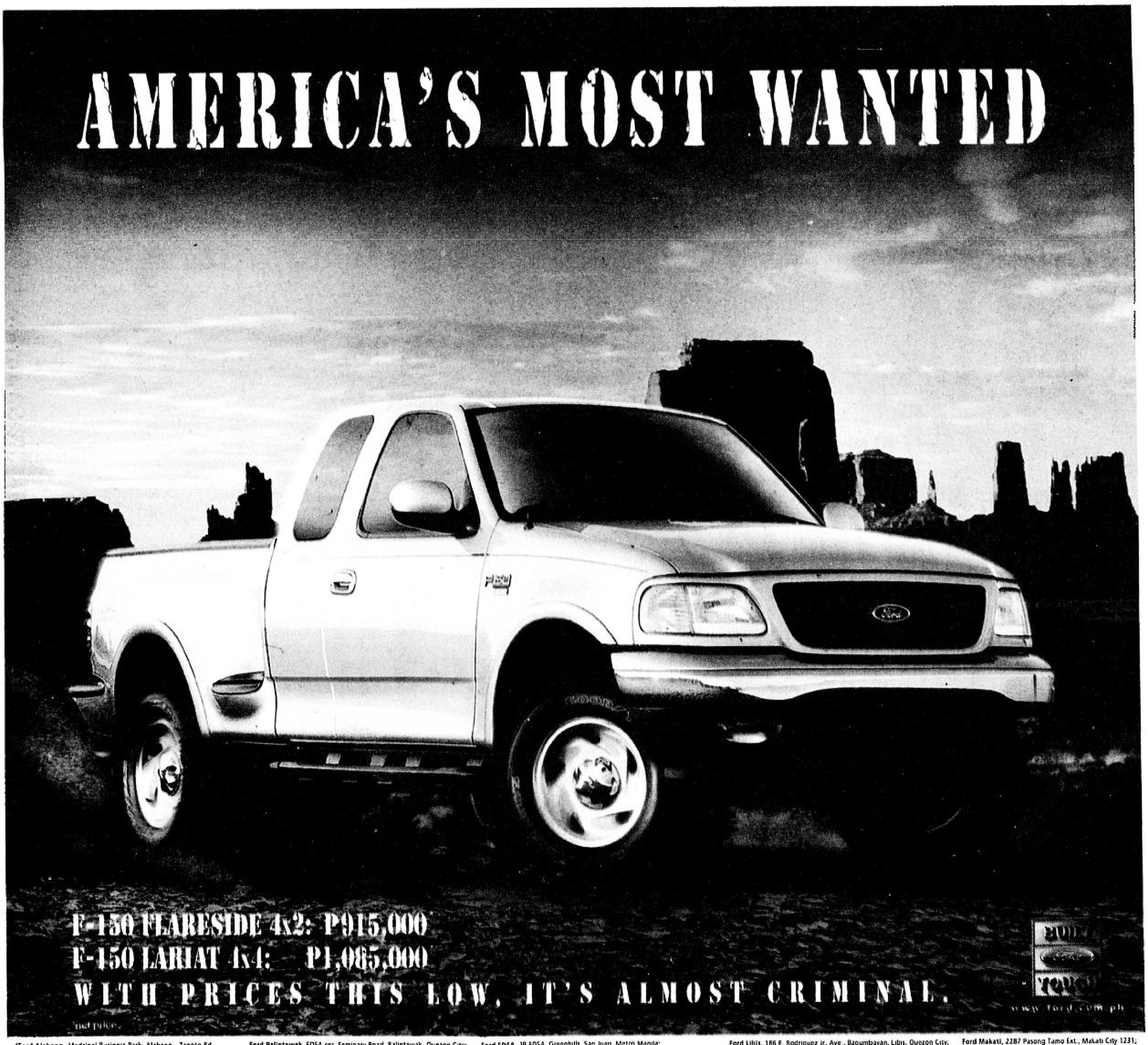
Weighing on the index was blue chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., which lost P10, or 1.4 percent, at P715, following the 29-cent, or 2.1 percent, decline to $13.86 in the company's American Depositary Receipts in New York on Monday.

AP

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B6)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Ford Cabanatuan, Maharlika Highway, Sumacab-Este, Cabanatuan City; Tel No.: (044) 464-0111 ; Fax No.: (044) 600-4200
Ford EDSA, 29 EDSA, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila; Trunk Lines: 726-7181 to 85; Fax No.: 723-6311
Ford Pampanga, San Fernando - Olongapo Highway, City of San Fernando, Pampanga; Trunk Line: (045) 961-2888; Fax Nos.: (045) 963-5205 / 961-2277
Ford Libis, 186 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City; Trunk Line: 637-2044; Fax No.: 637-6008
Ford Cebu, Magallanes cor. P. Burgos St., Cebu City 6000; Trunk Line: (032) 253-0453; Fax No.: (032) 253-0429
Ford Makati, 2287 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City 1231; Trunk Line: 818-5555; Fax No.: 815-0513
Ford Davao, Km. 6, Lanang, Davao City; Tel. No.: (082) 234-1111; Fax No.: (082) 234-2222

Telecom contractor sues PLDT, 2 Japanese firms

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

ARV Communications Inc., an all-Filipino telecommunications contractor, has filed a P25-million suit against Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and two big Japanese companies for allegedly rigging a public auction nearly two years ago.

In a case it filed before the Makati Regional Trial Court on June 7, ARV said PLDT conspired with Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Co. and NTT World Engineering Marine to bump it off a project it was bidding for.

PLDT officials declined to comment on the case, saying they had yet to review it.

ARV was the only Filipino company out of 16 to 17 bidders that offered cable repair and similar services for PLDT's submerged fiber optic network.

According to documents obtained by the INQUIRER, PLDT required prospective contractors to provide a dedicated cable ship and a remote operated vehicle that would inspect, maintain and repair its submarine cables.

ARV said NTT offered to sell its cable ship, the CS Koyu Maru. The vessel was described as "one of the most suitable solutions for the project from both technical and economical points of view."

ARV submitted its proposal to PLDT on May 14, 1999, including the general specifications of the CS Koyo Maru. It also later submitted a copy of the cable ship's track record upon PLDT's request.

Less than a month later, on June 7, ARV told PLDT that "our principal consultant NTT WE Marine will provide us with additional training in Japan on deep-water repair using the vessel."

On Oct. 5, ARV received a letter from PLDT stating that "your company is being considered after a thorough technical and commercial evaluation as among the top three contractors."

NTT WE Marine, however, expressed impatience over the time it was taking PLDT to select a contractor for the project, and gave ARV until Jan. 10, 2000 to acquire the cable ship.

When the deadline came, however, PLDT had yet to choose a contractor.

In a meeting the following day, PLDT international and Luzon network management center head Raymund Relucio supposedly told ARV representatives: "You are not the one. You lack experience and the other bidders are more flexible."

ARV said Relucio also told its representatives that its vessel, "through our research, is due for junking already."

Relucio also apparently said PLDT would be "awarding the contract in two weeks time, unless you come up with something spectacular."

On Feb. 7, ARV received a letter from PLDT stating that "your company was not chosen for the long-term maintenance of the DFON submerged plant."

The project, however, was not awarded to any of the other bidders.

In August 2000, news came out that "PLDT expects to cut operating costs by 30 percent with its new cable ship. Its acquisition of the cable ship from NTT WE Marine would allow it to immediately reduce maintenance expenses."

This led ARV to believe that PLDT directly talked to NTT and NTT WE Marine without its knowledge when it was actually the one who brought to PLDT's attention the existence of NTT's CS Koyo Maru.

Incidentally, NTT announced on June 4, 1999 its acquisition of a 15-percent stake in PLDT.

In September 2000, PLDT acquired the CS Koyo Maru from NTT and renamed it CS PLDT.

NTT WE Marine, however, denied responsibility for ARV's losses. PLDT, on the other hand, declined to hold a dialogue.

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. clarified that although the company has been approached by a number of parties for its stake in Smart Communications Inc., the possibility of selling its shares has not been the subject of deliberation by PLDT's board.

* * *

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. denied having any information that could explain the 50-percent increase in its share price which rose from P1 to P1.50 per share.

* * *

RFM Corp.'s next quarterly cash dividend of P0.1167 per preferred share shall be payable on July 11 in favor of stockholders as of June 27.

* * *

THE VENUE of Anglo Philippine Holdings Corp. has been changed from the Batanes Room of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel to the Boracay I and II Rooms of the same hotel.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. disclosed the resignation of Roberto Mulonzo as director of the company.

* * *

BANK of the Philippine Islands declared a regular cash dividend of P0.80 per share and a special cash dividend of P1.60 per share. *Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, June 21, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	75	75.5	74.5	75.5	284,500
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39	37	37	95,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	218	218	216	217	66,150
Philippine National Bank	46	46	46	46	16,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	25.5	26	21,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
BANKARD INC.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.33	0.37	0.33	0.37	40,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1340	1350	1340	1350	2,840
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1120	1135	1120	1135	8,860
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	40	40.5	40	40	4,700
Diversified Fin. Network	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.52	0.53	680,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	650	670	650	670	320
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	10,000
Piltel	0.6	0.64	0.59	0.64	130,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	725	725	715	715	56,910
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.039	0.039	0.037	0.038	148,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	39.5	39.5	39	39.5	35,400
Manila Electric Co. B	56	56	55.5	55.5	72,300
Petron Corp.	2.24	2.26	2.18	2.2	11,020,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	33,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.8	3.1	2.65	2.65	19,026,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.45	0.49	0.45	0.49	110,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	200,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.18	1.24	1.16	1.22	9,574,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2	2	41,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5	5.3	4.9	5.3	11,624,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	635,100
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	26.5	27	26.5	27	1,628,700
RFM Corp.	1.46	1.66	1.4	1.66	11,811,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42.5	43	42.5	43	68,500
San Miguel Corp. B	47.5	48	47.5	48	314,100
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5.2	5	5.2	7,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	9,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.1	7	7.1	2,148,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.48	2,396,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10.75	11.25	10.75	11	2,900
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.9	250,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.54	0.54	23,300,000
APC Group Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.29	0.24	0.245	6,550,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.7	1.7	8,055,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	500,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	70,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.3	1,990,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,000,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	253,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26.5	26.5	26	26	85,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	500,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.75	0.75	1,530,000
Ionics Inc.	11.25	11.25	11	11	45,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	150,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.12	2.28	2.12	2.14	1,602,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	190,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	800,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	100,000
Multitech Inv. Corp	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	50,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	910,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.52	0.5	0.5	6,320,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	2,600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	350,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,000
Music Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.14	2.14	662,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.66	0.67	0.66	0.67	90,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.095	0.096	0.095	0.095	1,500,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.115	0.116	0.11	0.115	290,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.9	0.9	0.87	0.87	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.75	15.75	54,000
Stoniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	350,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.46	0.49	0.46	0.48	1,450,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.56	0.58	0.56	0.56	1,780,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	1,180,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs Corp (Pdr)	40.5	40.6	40	40	242,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp-Pref	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.16	85,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0026	0.0026	15,000,000
RFM Corp. - Pref.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	50,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.029	56,100,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6	6	6	6	50,000
Far Eastern University	370	370	370	370	1,060
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.6	5.4	5.6	9,978,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	4,290,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	2,970,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.22	537,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	320,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	10,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12	1,200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.4	4,828,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.045	0.0675	0.045	0.06	397,500,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.055	0.065	0.055	0.0625	20,200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	270,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.205	0.22	0.205	0.21	450,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	34,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	9,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	91,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.018	0.021	0.019	0.02	66,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.42	0.42	0.35	0.35	2,630,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.43	0.39	0.39	4,230,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	950,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.022	19,600,000
Interport Res.	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	3,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	90,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	8,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	20,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	34,200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	300,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	645,050	54,374,800.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	357,336,890	371,153,135.00
PRO	24,134,000	90,556,840.00
Mining	626,230,000	29,321,650.00
OIL	158,170,000	1,492,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,166,515,940	546,899,325.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	596.88	DOWN 1.33
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,022.39	UP 1.66
PRO	552.56	UP 7.67
Mining	1,517.32	UP 18.58
OIL	1.49	UP 0.03
All Shares Index	777.86	UP 7.77
Composite	1,444.17	DOWN 5.28

NO. OF ADVANCES: 36; NO. OF DECLINES: 40; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 42;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 118; NO. OF TRADES: 4,372

CURRENCIES

June 21, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.170823	1.000000	52.0710
Japan	Yen	0.009461	0.008081	0.4208
United Kingdom	Pound	1.637513	1.398600	72.8265
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.150115	0.128213	6.6762
Switzerland	Franc	0.656107	0.560381	29.1796
Canada	Dollar	0.763796	0.652358	33.9689
Singapore	Dollar	0.642956	0.549149	28.5947
Australia	Dollar	0.606488	0.518001	26.9728
Bahrain	Dinar	3.105797	2.652661	138.1267
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.312212	0.266660	13.8853
Brunei	Dollar	0.641195	0.547645	28.5164
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000089	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.025886	0.022109	1.1512
UAE	Dirham	0.318808	0.272294	14.1786
Korea	Won	0.000898	0.000767	0.0399
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.854100	44.4738
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.436694	22.7391
France	Franc	0.152450	0.130207	6.7800
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.387574	20.1814
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.062070	3.2320
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021173	1.1025
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000441	0.0230
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.143649	7.4799
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.00426	0.2218
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005133	0.2673
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021173	1.1025
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.084483	56.4701

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Milking the Madrigals

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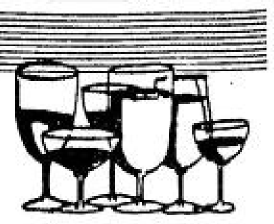

By Victor C. Agustin

THE MULTIBILLION-PESO windfall the Madrigals received from the sale of Solidbank has spawned a new lawsuit and further embarrassment to at least one branch of the extended old-rich family.

Now the former wife of Vicente Madrigal Bayot, Ma. Rebecca Makapugay Bayot of Ayala Alabang, is asking her ex-husband at least P13 million she claimed she had already spent to support their lone 18-year-old daughter, an additional P220,000 a month "permanent support" for the same daughter, and an undetermined amount, probably in the scores of millions, representing the daughter's presumptive legitim, meaning her share in the Madrigals' multibillion-peso estate.

What is strange in the civil suit filed by the ex-wife is that she is asking for the nullification of her marriage to the Madrigal scion when all along, the two signed not one but two divorce decrees in 1996 and 1997 all the way in the Dominican Republic to dissolve the 1979 church marriage they contracted in Greenhills.

In filing for this new "absolute nullity" of their marriage, the ex-wife also staked claim to the conjugal partnership of gains "not limited" to the Ayala Alabang home where she has been staying even after their messy separation.

The husband, 48, who is into construction, is allegedly now living in Twin Towers with another woman.

In turn, the ex-wife, 47, an ex-equestrienne, allegedly lives with her horse trainer, a Portuguese; strangely, the ex-wife executed a legal document acknowledging that the child she conceived in 1995 was "the result of my relationship with a person other than my said former husband."

Stung by his ex-wife's new demands and allegation that he is just a rich bum, the husband struck back with a perjury case, saying that the ex had misrepresented herself as a Filipino in the new civil suit when all along she had signed various legal documents as an American, born in Guam.

The Makati prosecutors' office found prima facie evidence for the allegation, filed a perjury case, and, this Tuesday, Makati Metropolitan Trial Court Judge Leticia Querubin Ulibarri issued a warrant of arrest for the ex-wife.

Jinggoy's toy

OUTGOING San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada may be shedding crocodile tears now about his alleged victimization and the loss of his rights and freedoms but, still, he manages to cock a snook against law and civic duty whenever he can.

Despite Edsa II, the white SUV (looks like a Lexus) that Estrada and his family have been using for some time now still sports no license plates. What is strange is that the Estrada police escorts prefer to look the other way from this vehicular infraction.

Proof? Review the tape shown by Channel 7's "Saksi" news program that was shown Wednesday evening, and you will see.

Misleading disclosures

FOR someone who owns a newspaper, the disclosures made by Enrique Razon Jr. about the sale of ICTSI shareholdings to Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka Shing had been wrapped in financial obscurantism.

After titillating the local market with a $400-million figure last Monday, International Container Terminal Services Inc. yesterday made a revised disclosure, this time saying it will only receive, for the moment, a total of about $160 million cash from the Li Ka Shing buyout.

In the meantime, the sharks in the market had already feasted on the suckers who believed the inflated rumors (one variant: the Li Ka Shing deal should push the ICTSI price to P5/share range), spread and encouraged no less by the Razon allies in the stock market.

Razon himself is safely out the rumors' way, enjoying quality time with his family in his San Francisco retreat, and would not be back until the end of the month.

If only Mark Jimenez could get hold of the list of buyers and sellers of ICTSI in the last three months, the newly elected congressman from Pandacan just might even up some, long-unsettled scores.

Short takes

- THE APPOINTMENT of Frank Alba of the Prudential Group as the next ambassador to the Vatican has already been signed by the President.
- EX-NAPOCOR president Guido Delgado is said to be slated for the Board of Investments, presumably as managing director.

Heard through the grapevine

AT the rate cancellations from the Taiwanese delegation is going, the July 11-13 annual cooperation meeting between Taiwanese businessmen and their Philippine counterparts might altogether be scrapped.

The meeting venue is the Mandarin hotel, where the Taiwanese visitors will also be billeted. From an original 120 expected, the organizers as of yesterday could not commit even 70 from Taiwan.

We understand that Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II has already spent quite a fortune in overseas phone bills enticing the neighbors from the north.

If you guessed the Abu Sayyaf and the kidnappings as reasons for the Taiwanese dropout, why, you get an "A" for current events.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Bangko Sentral keeps key rates unchanged

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday kept overnight borrowing and lending rates unchanged at 9 percent and 11.25 percent as the peso remained weak and its threats to inflation becoming more imminent.

The peso yesterday stayed at the P52-to-$1 level and closed at P52.20 to a dollar.

In a statement, the BSP also warned market players against speculating on the local currency as local monetary authorities sought recommendations from the central bank management on what measures could help ease the pressure on the peso.

"The Monetary Board asked the BSP to continue monitoring closely the foreign exchange activities of market players," it said.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the recent volatility in the exchange rate led local monetary authorities to keep interest rates at current levels.

He admitted that the recent exchange rate depreciation was not in line with the movement of regional currencies. Tetangco said that "if the peso weakness was temporary, then the impact to inflation won't be much."

But while the peso continued to suffer from volatility because of local peace and order problems and negative regional developments, the Monetary Board believed that it may affect inflation in the coming months.

A declining local currency is usually inflationary because more pesos will be released into the economy once overseas contract workers convert their dollars.

Tetangco said that monetary authorities would re-assess the situation next week after the US Federal Reserve meeting on June 26. US analysts remained divided on whether the Fed would cut interest rates by 25 or by 50 basis points.

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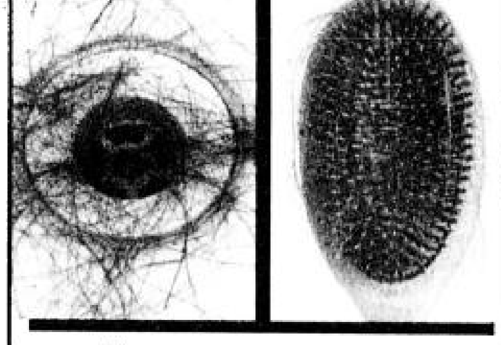

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To learn more, join us as SAP Philippines formally launches its mySAP Customer Relationship Management (mySAP CRM) solution for the Philippine business community in two separate meetings. The morning briefing is strictly for CEOs, COOs, CIO, CMOs and CFOs. The afternoon meeting is open to all IT professionals.

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MORNING SESSION: CEO BRIEFING

June 26, 2001, 8:30 - 12:00 nn, Makati Shangri-La Hotel

8:00 am	Registration
8:30 am	**Welcome Remarks** Marivic Segismundo Gamo, Marketing Manager, SAP Philippines
8:35 am	**Keynote Address: CRM Overview** Ian Black, Managing Director, SAP Philippines
8:55 am	**1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success** Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia
9:55 am	Coffee Break
10:10 am	**Panel: Developing a Customer Centric Business Culture in the Phils.** Moderator: Michael Alan Hamlin Panelists: Satyavrath Krishnaswamy, Business Devt. Director for CRM, SAP Asia Richard Lozada, Director, E-Commerce Solutions Grp., Microsoft Phils. Michael Higgins, CRM Consultant, IBM Asean Global Services Nilo Paul Nepomuceno, Technical Consulting Organization, Business Customer Sales Organization, Hewlett-Packard Philippines Vince Tan, EVP, Ayala Land
11:40 am	**Closing Remarks** Marivic Segismundo Gamo, Marketing and Alliance Manager, SAP Philippines

AFTERNOON SESSION: IT PROFESSIONALS BRIEFING

June 26, 2001, 1:00 - 6:00 pm, Makati Shangri-La Hotel

12:30 pm	Registration	
1:00 pm	**Welcome Remarks** Ian Black, Managing Director, SAP Philippines	
1:15 pm	**1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success (Part One)** Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia	
2:15 pm	**Customer Relationship Management** Satyavrath Krishnaswamy, Business Development Director for CRM, SAP Asia Joey Magalona, Country Manager for Lotus Product Services, IBM Phils. Bambi Castillo, Sr. Consultant, Hewlett-Packard Consulting South East Asia	
3:30 pm	**Breakout Sessions**	
	Workplace	Gregor Bernstein, Regional Training and Development, SAP Asia Albert Tan, Integration Consultant, Professional Services, Compaq Phils.
	Marketplace	Pierson Broome, Director of PSO, SAPMarkets Asia Pacific Solutions Pte Ltd.
	SCM	Augusto Verzosa, Senior Solutions Manager/SCM Consultant, SAP Philippines Jojo Ayson, Technology Manager, E-Commerce Solutions Group, Microsoft Philippines
4:15 pm	**1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success (Part Two)** Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia	
5:30 pm	**Closing Remarks** Marivic Segismundo Gamo, Marketing and Alliance Manager, SAP Philippines	

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Equitable pays half of BSP loan

EQUITABLE PCI Bank yesterday said it had prepaid half of its P30-billion obligation with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, incurred at the height of the political crisis that adversely affected the bank six months ago.

In a statement, the bank also said it has been successful in winning back the majority of the depositors that shied away from the bank during the crisis.

Equitable PCI Bank president Deogracias N. Vistan, in the same statement, said, "We have recovered more than half of the funds that left us during the crisis."

He said a vigorous deposit recovery program enabled the bank to significantly reduce its BSP loan barely five months after the crisis while many thought the bank could fully pay the loan in three to five years.

"We are confident that the remaining half of the BSP loan can be settled within the remainder of the year," Vistan added.

Most Equitable PCI Bank branches throughout the county have reported remarkable progress in the deposit generation program.

In a letter addressed to bank clients, Vistan said, "We are deeply appreciative of the loyalty, confidence, and support of our valued clients."

Equitable PCI Bank will start new programs to further improve its package of customer services. Next month, it will launch its newly redesigned FASTNet internet banking service which is expected to further enhance accessibility and convenience to bank customers.

PLDT's ASEAN Alliance unveils ACASIA IP VPN Service

The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company's ASEAN alliance, ACASIA launches today in Singapore the very first regional IP VPN service which offers customers benefits and advantages through its intelligent networking capabilities. ACASIA IP VPN service enables companies to engage in and perform multi-tasking and simultaneous tasking activities with incredible ease.

This innovative service is extremely beneficial for frequent traveler-executives who are on call 24 hours a day, to either catch very important groundbreaking news or transmit confidential documents to their offices. With this launch, ACASIA moves into a new era of IP service offering.

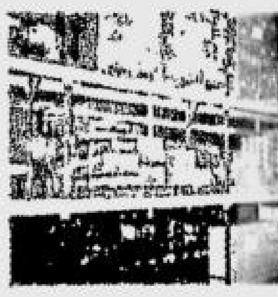
Traveling users who are geographically scattered can easily log into their office networks from practically any corner of the ASEAN region and transfer files or send e-mails at very high speed. And since ACASIA IP VPN is launched over the ACASIA ATM backbone using MPLS technology, confidentiality of the documents sent and received is guaranteed.

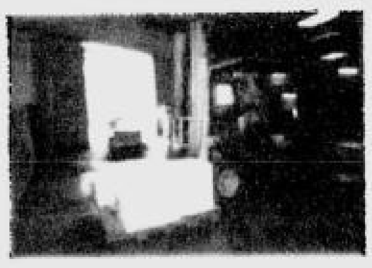
ACASIA IP VPN also provides state-of-the-art communications that allow companies to exploit the full capabilities of their intranet and extranet networks. This consists of a combination of high quality networking and fully managed infrastructure coupled with end-to-end security to increase and intensify the companies accessibility.

This latest service offering embodies ACASIA's goal of continually providing customers with an efficient and cost-effective knowledge-powered platform.

***ACASIA Communications** is a consortium of ASEAN' S six leading telecommunication providers, namely: Communications Authority of Thailand (CAT), PT Persero Indosat (Indonesia), Jabatan Telekom Brunei (JBT), Singapore Telecom, Telekom Malaysia and PLDT.*

ACASIA aims to provide high-quality networking services for all customers in the ASEAN region at highly competitive prices. For the last few years since its inception, ACASIA has grown impressively, posted to be a major force in ASEAN's telecommunications front. Its main headquarters is in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.





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Labor disputes in the SSS and the BIR

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

IS THIS government really for the people or against the people? Considering that it was the people, spearheaded by the civil society, that installed this administration in power, shouldn't the new power-holders exercise a little prudence in making sure that its action do not unnecessarily exacerbate the sufferings of the powerless, especially those working faithfully for long years in the government?

Should a government that grabbed power, not by the ballot, but by revolution, be so overbearing as to disregard the basic rights of civil servants to security of tenure and humane conditions of work? Should newly appointed executives be so unfeeling and impervious to the already pitiful plight of their own workers?

If so, then this government should brace itself for a major backlash of disillusionment and anger that is about to erupt in the SSS and the BIR. These problems in these government units, that directly affect millions of Filipinos, can very well be the crucial test to the GMA administration on the basic yet crucial issue of how does it regard and care for its own working people.

This is not about law. This is about fundamental justice. This is not about personnel management or labor relations. This is about the basic sense of decency and respect for human beings who are trying their best to do good and contribute to the society. This is not even just about jobs. This is about careers of people, their livelihoods. This is about their very life and about human dignity.

The civil servants, the small guys who keep the engines of the government running, they who do the dirty jobs while the big bosses spend their executive hours in junkets and media posturing—this is about them. They are being threatened again of questionable transfers and hasty privatization. They are the most helpless and vulnerable. They are the easiest to sacrifice and the most dispensable pawns in the dirty game of bureaucratic merry-go-round.

The career employees of the SSS and the BIR are restless not just because certain benefits or perks are being denied or delayed but because of a more serious threat that they now face, an assault against their jobs. These are not merely the normal run-of-the-mill conflict between the exercise of managerial prerogatives, on one hand, and the rights of labor, on the other hand. This involves their careers and their lives.

BIR commissioners and SSS administrators come and go. They are political appointees, subject to the changing tides of political fortunes. But career executive officers and civil service "eligibles," even the permanent casuals, are the core forces that assure the stability of the bureaucracy. They are the people who continue to man the ramparts of public service regardless of who is in power. To endanger their job security is indeed to shake the very foundation of public service. This government should be better prepared for the consequences.

BIR commissioners, even if they are acting in good faith, cannot hide themselves under the legal fiction of employers' prerogative to transfer. The rule applies with stringent force in the private sector where management prerogatives stand, solidly anchored on property ownership over the business. But this is the government and commissioners don't own the BIR. Even under our labor law and jurisprudence, the exercise of the prerogative to transfer must not be characterized with grave abuse of discretion or recklessness.

SSS administrators, notwithstanding commendable intentions or plans, cannot just peremptorily declare that SSS money is private money, therefore there is nothing to privatize further. He very well know that SSS employees are GSIS members, covered by the Civil Service Law and the SSS is a government-owned and controlled institution. And SSS administrators don't own the SSS.

The SSS, even as its people are administering private contributions, are manned by government employees. The SSS contributions emanating from private sources become public funds under the custodial trust of the SSS. Thus, to place these funds in the hands of the private sector is to court disaster. The future fund managers, under the privatized set-up, will no longer be subject to prosecution with the Tanodbayan and the Sandiganbayan. Considering the SSS' tract record under the past regime, this is very dangerous.

A privatized set-up can justify multimillion-peso salaries for fund administrators as they shall be removed from the wage and position classification system of the civil service. SSS members can hardly influence, much less control, the choice of these fund managers. Thus, the lack of accountability will be exacerbated further.

The BIR commissioner's right to transfer must be seen not only within the myopic criterion of law. It should be perceived from the total perspective of a just and humane employer-employee relations. Every commissioner, to paraphrase the mother of all laws, must act with justice, give everyone his due and observe honesty and good faith.

BIR commissioners and SSS administrators must rise above the technicalities and face the total picture and should not be shielded by some uncaring middle manager and underlings. The BIR is not exactly popular among the people. The SSS is now one of the most inefficient and least people-friendly government agency. This was not because of the small guys who are just trying to do a good job, but because of the so many VPs and executives who seem to forget that they are working for the people.

Those guys who acquired power through the grace of the people should know where to go when the people realize that they are more a pain than a blessing. The people will know what to do. We should never forget—sovereignty resides in the people and the authority emanates from them.

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)

Gov't reviews deficit targets

By Clarissa S. Batino

A SWOLLEN budget gap in May has prompted the Macapagal administration's economic team to seriously consider raising its budget deficit targets for this year and next. The present targets were set at P145 billion for this year and P120 billion for next year.

"We will revisit the deficit numbers when the DBCC (Development Budget Coordinating Council) meets on Saturday," said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin in an interview yesterday.

The inter-agency DBCC will meet on Saturday to re-assess the fiscal situation in the country in the light of the more-than-expected deficit in May that reached P30.247 billion, or 28.8 percent more than the P23.488 billion target for the month.

As a result, the five-month budget gap swelled to P58.326 billion from only P28.097 billion in the first four months of the year. Boncodin noted that the five-month deficit, despite the hefty increase in May, remained lower than the target for the first five months of the year of P61.7 billion.

From January to May, the government's revenues of P229.746 billion fell short of the P236.025-billion target. Government spending remained under control at P288.072 billion versus the five-month target of P297.783 billion.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho agreed that the government would have to look closely at factors affecting the deficit, particularly the collection of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the total government earnings.

"It's getting more and more difficult to achieve the full year target given the economic slowdown," said Camacho.

He noted that the DBCC had asked BIR Commissioner Rene Banez to make a presentation so the team could have a basis in deciding whether to adjust the deficit targets.

Camacho said that among the revenue-generating agencies of the government, only the BIR failed to meet its revenue collection target. The BIR accounted for the bulk of the earnings shortfall during the five-month period. This, he said, could be attributed to the slowdown in business activities.

Government revenues decline by P5 billion for every 1 percentage point drop in gross domestic product growth. The GDP growth target was scaled down to a range of 3.3 to 3.8 percent this year from an earlier range of 3.8 to 4.3 percent.

In May alone, government earnings reached only P42.367 billion, as against the target of P45.708 billion. At the same time, spending, amounting to P72.6 billion, exceeded the target of P69.196 billion. This was the first time this year that expenditure exceeded the target.

Boncodin denied that expenditures increased due to higher military spending. She said the rise was due to the bigger number of projects that piled up during the election ban and were finally processed right after the May 14 elections.

"The military is using its P39-billion budget for the year and while they asked for supplemental budget for supplies and medicine, we told them to first use up their present allocation," she said.

In the same month, the BIR's revenue collections amounted to only P28.439 billion versus its target of P33.025 billion while the Bureaus of Customs and Treasury both surpassed their targets of P8.812 billion and P1.578 billion with actual earnings of P9.255 billion and P2.369 billion.

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BUSINESS *Friday*

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

Recipe to successful brand marketing

BY KAREN V. DE ASIS

ONE aspect of business management that is often misunderstood and consequently neglected is brand marketing.

In a mad scramble for corporate profits and the fulfillment of short-term business objectives, many firms neglect the value of brand marketing activities. Consumer loyalty eventually erodes.

To prevent this, brand marketing requires value disciplines in a number of areas.

1. Define your position or brand meaning very early in the product or service life cycle.

Positioning is not what you do to the product but what you do to the mind of your prospective customers. That is, you position the product in the mind of your potential end-users. It is the product's positioning that tells the customer exactly what it stands for and drives the buyer to consume or use the product or service.

To be effective, the positioning statement should support the product. It must tell the user what the product or service is and what its key benefits are. The statement should be simple, focused and easy to understand.

Most important of all, it should be differentiated and communicated with drama, consistency and repetition at an early point of the product's life cycle so that the end-user immediately recognizes what the brand, product or service stands for when you mention the brand name.

An example of a brand in its very young state is the soon-to-open tertiary care hospital in Filinvest, Alabang. This early, Asian Hospital's message to its target market is "patient centered care in a total healing environment."

Its highly focused product supports this premise by providing the patient a physical environment that encourages healing and comfort. Its design interiors are done in soft, warm, healing colors coupled with subdued lighting, and pleasant landscape views provide an environment that promotes rest, relaxation and recovery.

2. Sustain the vision.

A clear brand definition requires vision. Vision encompasses the brand's roots—why you are in the business and where your company is headed. Many people tend to associate vision with some lofty, long-term journey or audacious goal that is difficult to define, let alone achieve.

But a vision for a brand can be simple. The key is that the vision must be consistent and sustainable. By and large, the most successfully positioned companies and brands in terms of growth, financial performance, visibility and market share are those that have linked a powerful brand positioning to an inspiring and achievable mission.

3. Establish customer intimacy and increasing emphasis on relationships.

Customers today want brands to be accountable for both their products and services. What they really want is the kind of lifetime relationship that existed in the days when buyers and merchants knew each other by name, and products and services are delivered to the customers with care and pride.

Asian Hospital hopes to integrate this value discipline into its operations and culture when it opens by assigning permanent primary caregivers to a patient throughout a patient's entire hospital stay thus, personalizing patient care and avoiding fleeting, processed caregiver-patient relationships.

4. Build alliances.

Complementing or supplementing a brand's strengths can contribute to growth. Examples include high-profile marketing alliances between Disney and McDonald's and the co-branding effort of a number of airline companies under the brand Oneworld, which includes Cathay Pacific, Aer Lingus, American Airlines, British Airways, Finnair, Iberia, Lanchile and Qantas.

Co-marketing activities can be especially effective but there has to be a fit between partners and complementary or supplementary relationships that makes sense to the marketplace.

5. Seek brand champions in the boardroom.

For any company, large or small, the absence of a brand champion is a serious flaw in the brand building process—guardianship of a brand must occupy a high priority. This means that it is best to have at least one brand champion in the firm's board of directors who will help pursue high profile brand marketing activities that reflect the brand's values.

It is vital, however, that there is a broad base of support at board level for the sake of longevity of brand marketing endeavors. Successful companies view marketing as a core or primary organizational process.

Understandably, organizations that treat brand marketing as a secondary process do not realize the value of this essential activity in demand creation, which ironically is an endeavor critical to the survival of any business.

However, brand management is organized for the company, remaining true to the brand's meaning is critical. Behind the power brands, the strategy is the key driver. None of the world's most powerful and admired brands achieved recognition without being consistent.

Never did they do anything that is out of character of the brand. Because to consumers, consistency means trust and trust builds brand loyalty and friendship. And behind all these, the brand champion at the board level becomes the critical force to help sustain the brand over time.

(The author is a professor of marketing and brand management at the De La Salle Graduate School of Business. She is also marketing director of Asian Hospital.)

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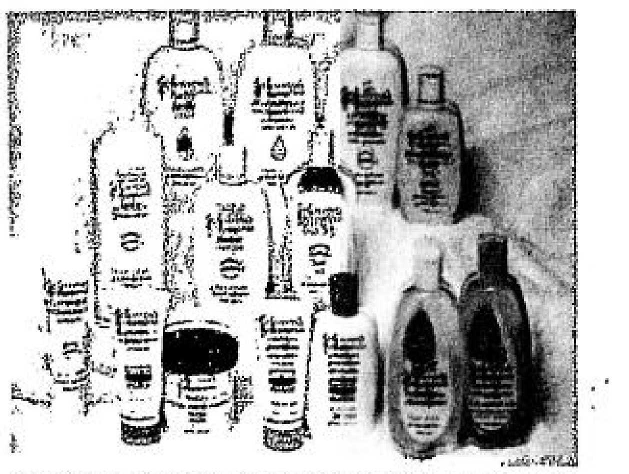

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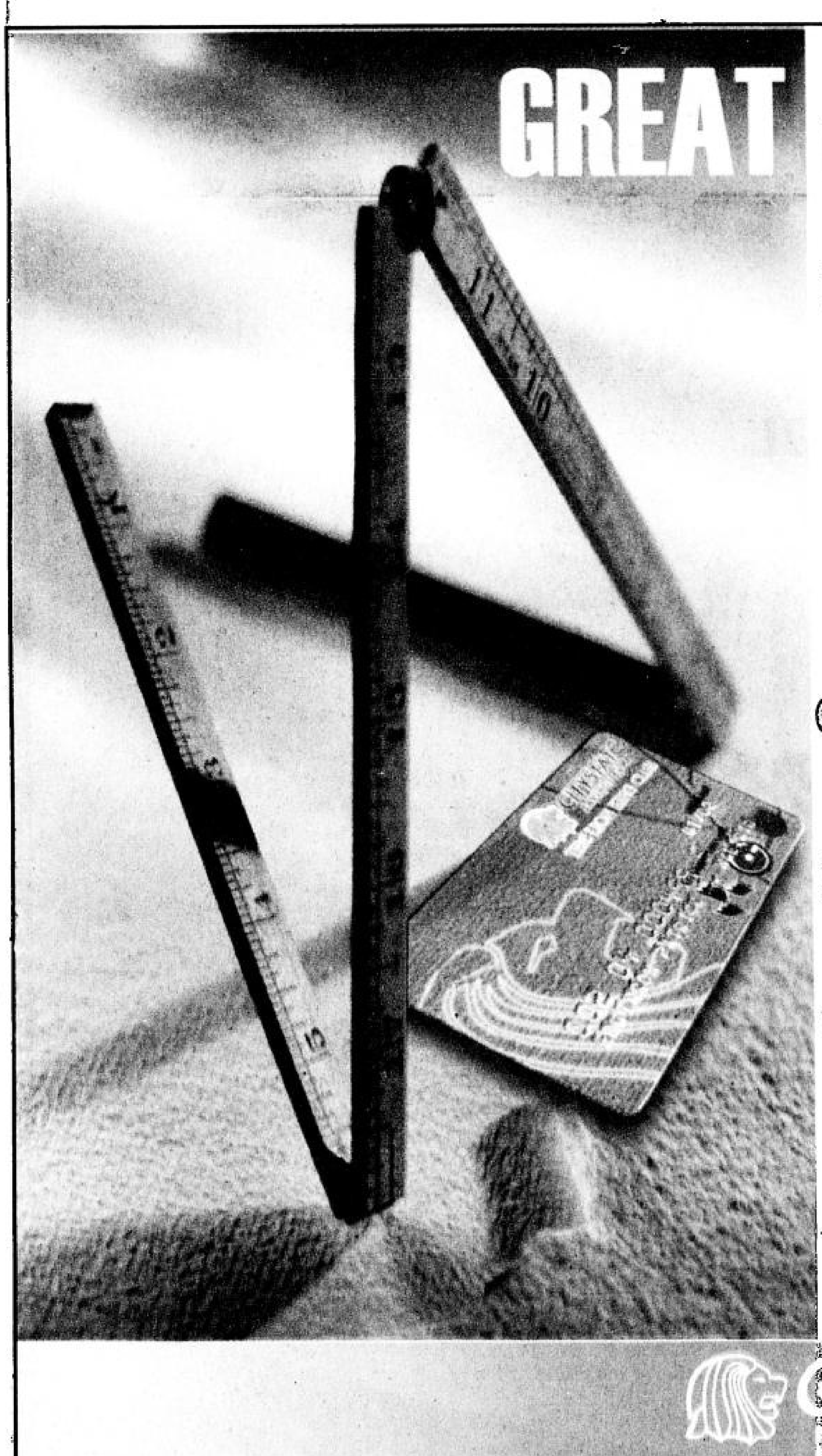

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MARKETING STRATEGY

Skip usual ads, go for parties

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

THE BEVERAGE industry is overflowing with hard alcoholic drinks of all shapes and sizes from all over the world.

But since it is considered a luxury item and not everybody can afford it, the industry has become very competitive and crowded. And the fact is those who can afford it can only drink so much in one night.

Despite the small market, Platinum Vault, a subsidiary of Premier Wine and Spirits Inc., believes that there is always room for another drink, especially for one that caters to business professionals and executives.

Sherwin A. Lao, general manager of Platinum Vault, tells Business Friday that people are always on the lookout for something new and a study of the market shows there are no big players in the market for ultra-premium liquors.

Platinum Vault, with its initial selection of Tequila Patron, Planters Gold Pyrat and Grey Goose Vodka, hopes to cover that niche market.

With other liquor distributors bombarding the market with a lot of advertisements and promotions, Platinum Vault will position its brands another way—by hosting business gatherings and exclusive parties to meet directly with the target audience.

"We believe that this is a better and more effective way of reaching out to the target market. Through these parties we would be able to help them appreciate our line of products," Lao says.

The most recent party held last month at the Prince Albert restaurant featured a sit down dinner where different wines and premium liquor were paired with various foods.

"We did not really make it into a selling event, we just introduced the products there," Lao explains.

Flagship product

Platinum Vault's flagship product is the Tequila Patron, which goes for a stiff P500 a shot. It is the latest toast in Hollywood and is favored by stars like Bruce Willis and rock singer Bruce Springsteen.

Tequila Patron claims to be among the world's finest and most elegant tequila from Mexico because it is made from premium selected rare Weber Tequilana blue Agave plants.

Unlike other tequila brands, the Tequila Patron can be sipped or savored instead of knocked back to reduce the bitter taste. Lao attributes this to the different processing technique that the manufacturers use to make the Patron.

It comes in three variants—silver or young tequila, reposado, which are aged in oak barrels for six months, and the Añejo, aged in white oak barrels to achieve a smooth refined flavor.

Platinum also carries the Planters Pyrat rum—a blend of nine Caribbean rums and imported from the British West Indies.

The rum is aged in special imported oak barrels and exhibits cognac like qualities in terms of aroma and texture. Bottles are individually hand blown and numbered, thus, appeals to the sophisticated market.

The third product is the Grey Goose Vodka, named the best tasting vodka by the Beverage Testing Institute for two consecutive years. It is created by a cognac master blender and made and bottled in France.

Lao says Platinum Vault already hosted parties and there was good response from the elite crowd. He emphasizes that they do not really need to go all out because they are bringing in only a small inventory to satisfy a niche market.

"We want to create an image that we bring the best products here first. We now have three products but in a few months time we will be replacing these or adding other products. We know that our market is always looking for something new, so we have to be there first," Lao says.

Aside from parties, Platinum Vault also promotes its liquors through direct selling, distribution in Duty Free Philippines outlets and sales in upscale wine shops and first class bars and restaurants.

"We will miss out on our market if we go mainstream like full scale advertising. Since we are only catering to a niche market, our promotional activities should fit that market," he says.

Your CTC: What it says about you

By **Luis Jose P. Ferrer**
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

TAXES are everyone's responsibility. Taxation is the indispensable and inevitable price for civilized society. Without taxes, the government would be paralyzed.

In the drive to improve tax collection, it may be good to remember the saying that "a journey of a thousand miles begin with the first step." Let us start with what may be the most basic of all taxes—the community development tax, residence tax or the so-called *cedula*.

According to Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel, in his book "The Local Government Code of 1991: The Key to National Development," the change in name indicates that residents have a financial obligation to contribute to the development of their communities.

Cities or municipalities may levy a community tax in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160).

Individuals liable to community development tax. Every inhabitant of the Philippines, foreigner or citizen, has to pay an annual community tax provided that the person (a) is at least 18 years of age, or (b) has been regularly employed on a wage or salary basis for at least one month, or (c) is engaged in any business or occupation, or (d) owns real property with total assessed value of at least P1,000, or (e) is required by law to file an income tax return.

This payment is evidenced by what is called the community tax certificate (CTC).

Exempt from community development tax are: (a) diplomatic and consular representatives, (b) transients whose stay in the country does not exceed three months, (c) persons who come to reside in the country on or after July 1 of any year, and (d) persons who turn 18 on or after July 1.

Juridical persons liable to community development tax. Juridical persons such as a corporation no matter how created or organized, whether domestic or resident foreign, engaged in or doing business in the Philippines are obliged to pay the community development tax every year.

Exempt from paying the community development tax for that year are corporations established or organized on or after July 1.

It is not unusual, however, for persons to pay community development tax only because the presentation of a valid community tax certificate is required in a transaction.

The Local Government Code of 1991 requires that the CTC be exhibited before: (a) getting a document notarized; (b) taking an oath of office in government; (c) getting a license, certificate or permit; (d) paying taxes or fees; (e) receiving money from a public official; (f) receiving money from a personal or corporate employer; (g) and transacting official business with a public official or employee.

The rule applies also to corporations.

Corporations are required to exhibit their corporate CTC whenever they: (a) receive any license, certificate or permit from any public authority; (b) pay any tax or fee; (c) receive any money from public funds; (d) or transact any other official business.

Rate of community development tax. The rate of the annual community tax for individuals is P5 plus an additional P1 for every P1,000 income regardless of whether it came from business, exercise of profession or property, which in no case shall exceed P5,000.

In the case of husband and wife, the additional tax imposed shall be based on the total properties they own and the total gross receipts or earnings.

The annual community tax for corporations is P5,000 and an annual additional tax is set at P10,000 at the most. A corporation pays an additional P2 for every P5,000 worth of property owned by the corporation in the country and another P2 for every P5,000 of gross receipts or earnings derived from the properties.

Every individual or corporation is issued a CTC. An individual or corporation not subject to community development tax may, however, get a CTC for P1.

Even if these rates are indicated in the CTC itself, it is not surprising to know of professionals, businessmen or executives who paid only P5.

Time and place of payment of community development tax. The community tax may be paid between Jan. 1 and the end of February of each year without delinquent interests. If tax is paid after that period, an interest of 24 percent a year is added from the due date until it is paid. The community tax of an individual is supposed to be paid in his place of residence. For juridical entities, it is paid in the place where the principal office is located.

Payment of the community development tax, however, is more often paid in the city or municipality of employment rather than the place of residence. As a result, the business centers may have collected more than their fair share of the community development tax than the residential communities.

How about one's financial obligation to contribute to the development of one's community?

Distribution of community development tax proceeds. The bulk of the proceeds of the community development tax accrues to the general fund of the cities, municipalities and barangays.

The proceeds of the community development tax collected solely by the city or municipal treasurer accrue entirely to the general fund of the city or municipality. The proceeds of the community development tax collected by barangay treasurers are divided equally between the city or municipality concerned and the barangay that does the collecting.

Media executives gloomy about ad prospects

NEW YORK—Media executives in the United States are somber about newspaper advertising prospects for the rest of the year, with most forecasting continued weakness amid uncertainty over the direction of the economy.

Monday, the first day of a midyear media conference sponsored by Gannett Co. Inc., executives of three leading companies said they saw no end this year to the advertising slump. A fourth said he believed the downturn has reached its lowest point and that advertising could pick up in the third and fourth quarters.

Job cuts continue to be a factor within the industry. Knight Ridder, the nation's second-largest newspaper publishing company after Gannett, said its previously announced plan to cut costs would mean eliminating 1,700 more jobs.

Meanwhile, though not presenting at the conference Monday, The New York Times Co. said it would cut up to 9 percent its workforce of 14,000, though said it would still meet Wall Street's expectations for its second quarter earnings.

The conference got under way three days after North America's largest newsprint manufacturer said it would trim its price by $25 a metric ton effective July 1.

The announcement by Abitibi-Consolidated Inc. marked its second $25 cut in recent months, reversing a series of price increases by newsprint makers that began in late 1999.

Newsprint price drop

While media executives said they were encouraged by the newsprint price drop, their concerns about the advertising decline dominated the first day of the conference.

"This year the downturn is caused by the economy," said Tony Ridder, Knight Ridder's chairman and chief executive.

Advertising at Dow Jones' flagship newspaper, The Wall Street Journal, fell 34 percent from the beginning of the year through May, said Peter Kann, Dow Jones' chair and chief executive.

Company officials hope Dow Jones would meet analysts' earnings predictions of 50 cents per share for the second quarter. Also, the company has no plans to provide earnings predictions for the third quarter or for the rest of the year.

"We really have no visibility, at this point, to when improvement is going to begin," Kann said.

Dow Jones will save an estimated $90 million this year through cost cutting. The company has reduced staff by the equivalent of 550 jobs, or 6 percent of its workforce.

Hurt by advertising declines at its newspapers and 10 television stations, Scripps' second-quarter earnings will be between 53 cents and 56 cents, missing analysts' expectations of 57 cents per share, said Daniel Castellini, the company's chief financial officer.

"We're not holding out much hope for the second half of the year," he said.

Knight Ridder

San Jose, California-based Knight Ridder said in April it would eliminate positions at most of its 32 daily newspapers, because of declining advertising and rising newsprint costs, but did not say how many until Monday.

The reduction of about 1,700 jobs, on top of about 400 jobs eliminated earlier in the year, is equivalent to slightly less than 10 percent of the company's work force of about 22,000.

"We will clearly be leaner, but still, I want to stress, adequately staffed," Ridder said.

Advertising declined about 2.5 percent in the first quarter and will be down an estimated 8 percent to 9 percent during the second quarter, he said.

Donald Graham, chair of The Washington Post Co., said the company's flagship newspaper had a 8.4 percent drop in advertising revenue from January through May.

The retail advertising climate shows "little signs of improvement," and help wanted ads are down 31.5 percent for the January-to-May period, Graham said.

"It has been worse every month and I have no reason to think we've hit bottom," Graham said.

Graham also said the company now has about $1 billion in debt and will not consider any major acquisitions in the near future unless "something terrific comes along." ***AP***

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Napocor workers brace for layoffs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

"WE are too young to retire and too old to be hired."

Abner Eleria, president of the NPC Employees Consolidated Union, told the Inquirer yesterday that this was the sentiment among many employees of the National Power Corp. who were now facing the prospect of losing their jobs.

The supervisor-based union is fighting for whatever benefits it can squeeze in following the approval of the Electric Industry Restructuring Act.

The power reform law provides a retirement plan of one-and-a-half-months worth of salary for every year of service for employees who will be retrenched once Napocor becomes a property of the private sector.

Eleria said most of the union's almost 4,000 members had been working for Napocor for 15 to 20 years.

He said most of them were worried that whatever separation benefits they might receive would not amount to anything substantial because at their age and with their qualifications they would have a hard time getting another job.

Napocor has less than 8,000 employees. It had about 17,000 employees when it was reorganized in 1994.

Earlier this month, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho assured Napocor employees that "improvements in the firm's reorganization can minimize the effects of privatization" on them.

The former energy secretary said the government "will ensure that we would maximize the number of employees absorbed by the institutions (that will replace Napocor)."

The power reform law creates the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. This company, to be headed by the finance secretary, will take over all of Napocor's disposable assets and assume all its debts.

"Regarding the separation pay, we have been able to successfully fight for one-and-a-half-months worth of salary per year of service for those of you who will be affected by the separation plan," Camacho said.

He added that the government had been "successful in protecting the interest of Napocor employees."

Camacho stressed that privatization was a process of change that would necessarily take time.

"This will not be immediate. This is not something that will happen this week or next month or six months from now," he said.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo said Napocor had set up separation benefit packages as provided by the power reform law.

He said Napocor would launch a training program so that its employees could acquire new skills.

He added that Napocor and the Department of Labor and Employment would start a job placement program.

"In fact, I have already contacted headhunters (or recruiters) hoping they and interested employees can talk," he said.

NECU's Eleria said the union, along with the NPC Executives Association and the NPC Workers' Union, would be working with the committees drafting the implementing rules of the power reform law.

"This is our second battle and we will push for better terms for the employees," he said.

No 757s yet, says Cebu Pacific

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU Pacific Air said it was still in talks with at least five foreign companies to lease three 757 aircraft.

"We should close (the deal) in the next couple of weeks," Cebu Pacific president and chief executive Lance Gokongwei told the Inquirer.

Cebu Pacific vice president for corporate planning Peggy Vera said Cebu Pacific might choose a leasing company this week.

"We have already narrowed (our choices) down to two, but I can't disclose any other details yet because we might lose our leverage," she said.

Vera said Cebu Pacific was "already into the nitty-gritty details of the lease terms."

Cebu Pacific got a temporary operating permit to fly international scheduled flights from the Civil Aeronautics Board early this month.

The airline has yet to secure the CAB's and President Macapagal-Arroyo's approval of its final destinations.

"For Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Guam, we already got the President's approval. We just have to wait for this to be transmitted to these countries," Vera said.

The flight to the United States, she said, was previously approved by the CAB, but it had yet to transmit its approval to the President.

For Japan, Australia, China, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, Cebu Pacific was still awaiting the CAB's approval.

"But we expect to fly international before the end of the year," Gokongwei said.

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Topics & Speakers :

Day 1 - 27 June 2001, Wednesday

0900-0930 Opening Ceremony
Message from President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo: to be read by Press Secretary Noel Cabrera

Inaugural Address
Augusto C. Lagman
President, Philippine Computer Society

0930-1045 Plenary Session 1
GLOBALISATION AND ASIA'S INFOCOMM FUTURE: OPPORTUNITY AND DANGER

Toby Melissa Monsod
Dept of Trade and Industry, Philippines

Ravi S. Sharma
IBM Global Services, Singapore

Kyung-Jo Lee
Korean Broadcasting Institute, Korea

1045-1115 Tea Break

1115-1245 Plenary Session 2
THE GROWING GAP BETWEEN THE INFORMATION RICH AND THE INFORMATION POOR

Javed Jabbar
South Asian Media Association
Pakistan

Ann Quon
Asian Development Bank, Philippines

1245-1400 Lunch Break

1400-1530 Parallel Session 1
OLD MEDIA ETHICS AND THE NEW MEDIA

Cyril D. Pereira
Telesis Consulting Ltd, Hong Kong

Tara Sinha
Indian Institute of Mass Communication
India

Luis Teodoro
Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility, Philippines

Parallel Session 2
TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES TO POLITICAL PARADIGMS

Binod Agrawal
TALEEM Research Foundation
India

Paiklasothy Saravanamuttu
Center for Policy Alternatives
Sri Lanka

Shyam Tekwani
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

1530-1600 Tea Break

1600-1730 Parallel Session 3
PROTECTING CHILDREN IN CYBERSPACE

Susan Sridhar
Women's Christian College, India

Latiffah Pawanteh
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
Malaysia

Parallel Session 4
CULTURAL HEGEMONY VS. DIVERSITY IN THE NEW INFORMATION AGE

Arun Mahizhnan
Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore

Ann-Belinda Preis
UNESCO, Paris, France

Wazir Jahan Karim
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Day 2 - 28 June 2001, Thursday

0900-1030 Plenary Session 3
WORK IN AN ERA OF COMPUTERISATION, AUTOMATION AND BIOMETRICS

Cynthia Mamon
Sun Microsystems, Philippines

Huang Weimin
Kent Ridge Digital Lab, Singapore

Mario Antonio Lopez
Asian Institute of Management,
Philippines

1030-1100 Tea Break

1100-1230 Plenary Session 4
CATCHING UP WITH E-LEARNING

Ian McDonald
The Commonwealth of Learning,
Canada

Elizabeth Hawthorne
ICUS Pte Ltd, Singapore

Miguel Q. Rapatan
De La Salle University, Philippines

1230-1400 Lunch Break

1400-1530 Parallel Session 5
INTERNET CONTENT: RECONCILING ON-LINE AND OFF-LINE RULES

Ang Peng Hwa
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

Margaret Uy
University of the Philippines Law Center
Philippines

Toh See Kiat
Tan Peng Chin & Partners, Singapore

Parallel Session 6
EXPANDING CUSTOMER BASE AND BUSINESS HORIZONS THROUGH WEB-MARKETING

Tomas Lopez, Jr.
Asian Institute of Management
Philippines

Linda Crider
Kohorst Design Works Inc.,
Hong Kong

Sung-Ho Park
Honam University, Korea

1530-1600 Tea Break

1600-1730 Parallel Session 7
ON-LINE PRIVACY: LEGAL ISSUES IN CYBERSPACE

Jane Kirtley
University of Minnesota, USA

Delia Tantuico
University of Asia and the Pacific
Philippines

Anilkumar Samtani
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

Parallel Session 8
NEW MEDIA AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Emily A. Abrera
McCann-Erickson, Philippines

K. Sriramesh
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

1800-2100 Annual General Meeting & Dinner
(for AMIC members only)

Day 3 - 29 June 2001, Friday

0900-1030 Plenary Session 5
INTERCONNECTIVITY FOR AN ENHANCED INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN ASIA

K. K. Gunawardena (invited)
Internat'l Telecommunication Union
Thailand

Ajay Kumar
Government of Kerala, India

1030-1100 Tea Break

1100-1230 Plenary Session 6
MEDIA CONVERGENCE OR MEDIA DIVERGENCE: PROMISES OF WEBTV AND MOBILE INTERNET

Madanmohan Rao
INOMY, India

Cecilio B. Lorenzo
Infocom Technologies, Philippines

1230-1400 Lunch Break

1400-1530 Parallel Session 9
DIGITAL BROADCASTING: NEW SERVICES AND ENABLING SYSTEMS

Anju Grover Chaudhary
Howard University, U S A

Farhad Mahmud
Ekushey Television Ltd., Bangladesh

Parallel Session 10
ON-LINE PUBLISHING: VISION AND STRATEGIES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Dennis Valdes
INQ7.com Corporation, Philippines

Madanmohan Rao
INOMY, India

1530-1600 Closing Ceremony
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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

MANDALUYONG

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

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PROVINCIAL

•SUBIC 9 has.+ good 4 subd 0919-2300217

OTHER AREAS

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VARIOUS AREAS

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Legaspi Village FCC Bldg.
119 Rada St. Three (3)
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48.88; 35.50; 46.00 @
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Leaseback optional

Galeria de Magallanes
Res. Condo GFA/220 sqm
3BDR/Mds Qtr/2 Prkng Slots
P9M Leaseback optional

MANILA
San Nicolas/Del Pan St.
Concrete Warehouse
Area: 1,579 sqm
P80,000/sqm

MUNTINLUPA
Ayala Alabang LA: 746 sqm
2-storey concrete 4BDR
GFA: 524 sqm P23M
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HOUSE & LOT

LAS PINAS

Semi Furnished 3BR 2TB BF Resort Vill., Las Pinas Alma 8733324

MAKATI

310sqm lot 2stry 4BR w/bath w/attic & maid's qtr w/ bath 4 car garage 2152 Fatima St. San Miguel Village, Makati P16M Call 8975127or28/8903229

Magallanes H&L LA367 2Sty 4BR 13M • 643-5313

MANDALUYONG

Capitolyo Pasig 631-3496

MARIKINA

Grnlnd bnew 3br 2M 9487112

PARANAQUE

Multi National H&L V/L 180-up • 643-5313

Tahanan Vill 300sqm 3BR 3TB MR 4CG P5M 928-2497

Tahanan - Vill 300sqm P3.5M (Neg) 928-2497

PASIG

Bo Kapitolyo LA986m² Bung w/Jap Hse-Garden 6435313

Lexington Subd Terms/Cash H&L T/hses 4M up 6435313

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Parcwood Pasig 753-2532 5br + Mr 0919-5889231 Rush

Pasig Greenpark Bungalow 658-2115 to 16

VV2 H&L LA743 FA351 4BR Garden-Nice • 643-5313

QUEZON CITY

Acropolis 4br 4tb 18-25M Call 633-7601/03

D. Tuazon SMH L411m² Baler St. QC L3000m² w/Hse SFDM QC L714 VLot 928-1469

GOODWILL HMES I 246 m² 3 BR T&B 4.5 M (neg) RAMIL #09178931480/9353921

Greenmdows 4BR Den 35M Facing West Call 412-1825

H&L 300m²/ Lot 8,148m² Whse 770m² nr SM/Fview Rbson T-4178698/4178699

LOYOLA GRAND VILLA LA401m² FA460m² 4BR 6TB Tel 4352346 0917-7062620

Mayon St. SMH-QC A-960m² Lot & Improv. 534-6610 / 818-8569 Jojo

Proj.8 296m²LA P4.5M Jipny Line • 431-4370

RIZAL

Beverly Hills Subd. Antipolo LA 650m² Hse, Area 500m² P12M 650-3393

Cuesta Verde Exec. Vill. Antipolo LA 120m² P240T Call 650-3393

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOUSE & LOT

RIZAL

Ferreiville Antipolo Bungalow 3BR • 658-2115 to 16

Gloria Heights Subd. Antipolo LA 218m² Hse-Area 86m² P1.8M Call 650-3393

Mtalban 5200/mo 6495616

Valley View Exec. Cainta ovrlkng MMla 658-2115/16

Valley View Exec Cainta Thse/Sgle det 658-2115/16

PROVINCIAL

Baguio Mansion Hse 4BR 2Md's Qtr 3TB 658-2115/16

OTHER AREAS

CanyonWoods Bingas 7.5M ownrlvng neg0917-8143792

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QUEZON CITY

180m²Nviches Cal 4186212

400sqm CPHomes T9389719

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS, P6500/m² nr ateneo 2420922

Loyola Grand 600m² @ P8500 Call 09185079799

RIZAL

Antipolo City Proper Coml 1766m² v.nice 658-2115/16

Antipolo V/L 5300m² Cheap w/Fruit Trees • 643-5313

Mla. East Road Taytay 667m² -1000m² 6582115/16

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PROVINCIAL

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Sta Rosa. 114Has @ P1,500/m² S. Super H-way 53 Has @P1,500/m² Along Barrio Road 652-0227 • 942-6181

SUBIC 96,828m² 4 subd. 047-9134120 Jhun

OTHER AREAS

Rawland Bataan 3-5HA P600/m² Cav 5HA 911-7940

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

MAKATI

Antel Platinum Valero Mkti 40.5m² w/Prkng Lot 658-2115/16

MANILA

ANTEL SEAVIEW TOWERS Along Roxas Blvd 226m² 5BR 3TB 3Parking Slot P70T/m² Call 681-1766

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PARANAQUE

Nice TH BF Resort Vil Las Pinas 1.6M 911-7940

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Antipolo LA2.0Has near Masinag Mrket 658-2115/16

RESORT

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

FACTORY/WHSE

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Warehouse A-1000m² Call 5346610/8188569 Jojo

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

MAKATI

Nr Buendia Newly Paint Condo Type TL 747-0101

Nr EDSA Cros w/Tel Strong H2O TL 747-0101

MANILA

SMiguel Goodah T7356427

MANDALUYONG

1BR Couple, 1Child, Maid w/Garage P5.5T 532-4446

PASIG

Unit 4 Rent Pasig 531-7704

QUEZON CITY

128th Ave 3BR2TB 9114510

HOUSE

MAKATI

MAGALLANES HOUSE POOL 8439292/8184966/8106557

MARIKINA

Monte Vista Subd Semi Furnh P25T/mo 6503393

PASIG

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PROVINCIAL

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CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

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Lots Alng Valley Golf Rd. 1.0 to 4.0 Call 658-2115/16

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF WATERMAN SERVICES CORPORATION

Notice is hereby given that WATERMAN SERVICES CORPORATION has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission a Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation, shortening its corporate life to June 30, 2001.

Any person who may have a claim against said corporation may present the same to MR. NORMANDO V. CENDANA at the principal office of the Company at No. 93 Maharlika Drive, United San Pedro Subdivision, San Pedro, Laguna.

The announcement serves as notice to all parties concerned of the dissolution of said Company.

(Sgd.) NORMANDO V. CENDANA
Corporate Secretary
WATERMAN SERVICES CORPORATION

(PDI - June 15, 22 & 29, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
REGIONAL HEALTH OFFICE NO. 4
QMMC Compound, Project 4 Quezon City

NOTICE TO BID

Center For Health Development No. IV, Quezon City, will conduct public bidding for the following, at the Generics Hall.

	Pre-Bidding	Public-Bidding
DRUGS & MEDICINES	July 02, 2001 10:30 a.m.	July 16, 2001 (Re-Bidding) 10:30 a.m.
SECURITY SERVICES	July 09, 2001 10:30 a.m	July 23, 2001 10:30 a.m

For further inquiries, please contact Mr. Moises A. Peralta, Jr OIC - Supply Management Section, at tel. no. 913-4527.

(Sgd.) ROSARIO H. FAMARAN, MD, MPH.
OIC Director IV

(PDI – June 22 & 25, 2001)

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Orient Sq. 150m² @350/m² w/Lights Imprvd Call 412-1825

•Jollibee Plaza 150sqm @45T/mo 412-1825

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

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PARLOR Rights Men/Women owner leaving 09198662234

RTW Ideal 4 Tiange 3738821

Work From Home 8937903

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELICIANA VILLAVEZA was extrajudicially settled and partition among the heirs per Doc. No. 127; Page No. 26; Book No. XXV; Series of 2001 before Notary Public ANGEL R. GONZALES of Pasay City
PDI- June 8, 15 & 22, 2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given on the loss of SP1 Stock Cert. 5902 w/ 20,000 shares under the name of Alexander James Henshaw. If no contest is presented, new cert. will be issued.
PDI--June 8, 15 & 22,2001
Call +852 25045260

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"She watches over the affairs of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness;
Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her."

Esperanza Pahati Alvendia

Chairman and President
The Jade Vine Restaurant, Inc.

passed on to her eternal reward
on June 19, 2001 at the age of 93

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

"Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

Esperanza Pahati Alvendia

President
Quezon City Academy

passed on to her eternal reward
on June 19, 2001 at the age of 93

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will take place on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park
after the 9:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio.

Caridad Dario Bello

(Widow of the late **Dr. Manuel R. Bello**)

of Candon, Ilocos Sur

Joined her Maker, June 21, 2001
at the age of 93 years.

Her children: **Jose & Irene, Emmanuel & Clara, Nieves & Manolito, Urso & Lina, Abundio & Nympha** (†), **Rosario** (†) **& Louise, Sol & Maribel** (†), **Maricar, Mediatrix & Bernardo** (†), **Guy & Dinah**, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, 143 G. Araneta Avenue corner Kaliraya Street, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

Director ARTEMIO O. MARQUEZ

of Imus, Cavite

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on June 20, 2001 at the age of 77.

His bereaved wife **Maria Victoria Villanueva-Marquez**; his children and their spouses, grandchildren and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose and happiness of his soul.

His body lies in state at Chapel C, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, June 26, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 9:00 AM Mass.

We design OBITUARIES for free.

ARCHITECT AUGUSTO A.T. BARCELONA

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on June 20, 2001 at the age of 65.

His remains lie in state at Hope Chapel, Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City

---

JUANITA NAVARRETE PACPACO

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on June 18, 2001 at the age of 90
at Capitol Medical Center.

Her body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 24, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park Marikina after the 8:00 AM Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

She will be greatly missed by family, relatives and friends.

Col. ARTEMIO G. PETIZA, MC (Ret.)

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on June 20, 2001 at the age of 74.

His bereaved wife **AURELIA ASENSI PETIZA**; children **SARI & ADY PESIGAN, JUANCHO** and **OYIE PIÑON, ROLAND** and **VIVIAN CUNANAN, RISSA** and **JIM GILLIGAN**; grandchildren, and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Jerome Emiliani Church, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Interment will be announced later.

"...though I walked in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me..."
Psalm 23:4

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of PhilBizInfo, Inc., Computer Engineering Corp., and Blac Gold Air Purifier Corp.

mourn the death of

GREGORIO ASENCIO LADAO

Who passed away in Oakland, California on June 19 at the age of 89.

His bereaved wife **Linda**; children **Jimmy** and **Conchitina**, **Romy** and **Lota**, **Roger** and **Met**, **Fred** and **Marilou**, and **Jun** and **Grace**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Prayers will be said at the National Shrine of Sacred Heart, San Antonio Village, Makati City at 6:00 PM from June 21 to 24 and at 12:15 PM from June 25 to 28.

His body lies at Colonial Mortuary Home, 2626 High Street, Oakland, CA 94619.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 23, 2001 after the 10:00 AM Mass.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

LEONOR B. GADDI

Sta. Ana, Pampanga

Peacefully joined her Creator on June 20, 2001 at the age of 83.

Her bereaved children, **LINDA & CESAR DAVID, JOSEFINA & EFREN TALAVERA, ELENITA & JORGE TAMAYO, LETICIA & ARNOLD DAYRIT, MAYOR DR. FRANCISCO B. GADDI JR. & ZENAIDA, ARNULFO & MARILOU, DR. CARMELITO & DRA. AGNES, WILFREDO & DR. WILHELMINA, LEONIDA & AL DAVID**, and **DOMININA & WILFREDO GUEVARRA**, brother **FELICIANO & MARINA**, and sister **DR. LORETO & RECTO MANGUNE**, in-laws, grandchildren and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Ana Multi Purpose Hall.
Interment will be on Sunday (June 24, 2001) at the Sta. Ana Municipal Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Requiem Mass.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

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†

In Loving Memory
on the
Second Death Anniversary
of

ENGR. JOSUE D. POLINTAN

who passed away on June 22, 1999

Holy Masses will be offered today at 6:00 and 6:15 a.m. at Our Lady of Beautiful Love-Merville, Holy Eucharist Parish-Moonwalk and St. Alphonsus Ma. de Ligouri Parish-Magallanes Village, Makati City.

The family requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Board of Directors, Management, and Employees of Integrated Energy Systems & Resources, Inc.

Share sorrow with the family of the late

HERNANDO S. CAO

Corporate Secretary

He peacefully joined his Creator on June 20, 2001 at the age of 44.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the Risen Lord Church, U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

We request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

"Lord, in your steadfast love, give him eternal rest."

In loving memory of

ALEX CAYCO CALAYAG

Beloved husband of **ADELIA**, father of **KAREN** and **EDWARD**, grandfather of **KATHRYN**

His body lies in state at the Tangos United Methodist Church, M. Naval Street, Navotas, Metro Manila.

A Necrological Service will be held at 10:00 AM Saturday, June 23, 2001 at Tangos United Methodist Church. And afterwards, the final blessing and interment will be held at 2:00 PM, at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

LAWRENCE C. CERIA

Of Magsingal, Ilocos Sur
August 7, 1911 - June 15, 2001

Survived by his son **Jorge**; daughter-in-law **Lyn**; grandchildren **George Jordan, James Jason, Jonalyn, Ralph Jaeger, Jinky Ann** and **Vincent Jeaner**; brother and sister **Francisca Alvarez, Juan Ceria, Florencia Ceria, Victoria Tolete**, and **Hipolito Ceria**.

Interment will be on June 23, 2001 Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Quezon City at 10:00 AM.

His remains lie in state at No. 18 Pangilinan Drive, Project 8, Quezon City.

Former music prodigy behind Hizon's catering

By Amelita R. Remo

SHE was a child prodigy, who started teaching piano at an early age of 11. But she gave up what could have been a very promising career in music, all for the love of Spanish dishes.

Erna Hizon Chua, owner of Hizon's, a catering service, relates her early experiences in the restaurant/catering business back when she was still a child and her mother, Melania, managed what was then, "Hizon's Kitchenette" in Ermita, Manila.

The little kitchenette was put up in 1950 and served many of the business establishments that crowded the area at the time such as SGV and Co. The family, however, decided to close it down in 1965, due to the damage done by the construction of a 16-storey building next door.

Even with her hectic schedule in teaching and practicing the piano, Erna would always find time to help around the restaurant.

Her fondest memories included having to deliver food to Malacañang during the time of President Macapagal in 1962. That was the closest she got to food at the time as her parents absolutely forbade her to cook, saying that it would ruin her hands.

Erna, however, would not be stopped from pursuing her cooking interests.

Erna recalls with a smile, "Cooking has been my hobby since childhood. I remember having to sneak around my mom just so I could cook different dishes."

In the end, her mother had no choice but to let her into the business because of the untimely death of her father.

Erna immediately gave up her music career and took over the restaurant business, until the store closed down in 1965. She resumed their catering business as Hizon's, which was also a bakeshop, in the Makati district at Kamagong St. Erna had to stop the business though, when she got married.

With a husband and two sons to take care of, Erna pursued her cooking interest by making her work home-based as opening up the restaurant would take time her time away from home. The luxury of having to work at her own house, was good enough for her to keep an eye on her family.

Contrary to what one may think, Erna's work, however, was just as busy as home. She would find herself awake until the wee hours in the morning, doing last minute computations on her recipes.

This is because Hizon's thrives on a one-woman-team management as Erna does all the work from the cooking, taste-testing, down to the computations and marketing. Although she hires people for manual labor such as preparing the ingredients, the main supervision and actual cooking remain solely on her hands.

Hizon's does catering for weddings and parties. However, Erna can only cater up to 500 persons. When big orders come her way, she sets aside at least three days to prepare for the grand event and she takes in extra labor from her neighborhood in Yague St.

Hizon's also does catering for various companies such as Singer, Philippine Geothermal, Procter & Gamble, Manila Bankers, US Embassy and at one time the trade and industry department and the Board of Investments.

She also has VIP and expatriate clients from exclusive subdivisions such as Forbes Park and Dasmariñas Village.

One interesting story she relates is that she would get orders for apple pie for relatives in Germany, which is supposed to be famous for its apple strudel. Her ensaymada, on the other hand, is more traveled than she is.

Having these kinds of clients is one of the reasons why she still personally supervises the bulk of the work.

"Most of our clients are very meticulous. When they notice or taste something different, they would call me up right away," Erna says.

Her strict attention to detail is perhaps the main reason why her clients continue to support Hizon's. She remarks, "It's probably the quality of our food. I try to be as precise as I could be with every dish I cook."

Her hard work paid off as orders continue to pour in despite the fact that she never has to do any form of advertising or PR work for Hizon's. She says her clients do it for her, thus, keeping Erna busy the whole year round. Her busiest time of the year would be during December because of Christmas, while March, April and May are typically slow months.

Hizon's bestsellers are Spanish dishes, which include paella and lengua estofado. They also offer various cakes, desserts and her version of the ensaymada.

Erna got most of her recipes from a long family tradition of home-cooked Spanish meals, which she inherited from her mother. Through experiments and innovations, she spiced up these basic Spanish recipes to develop her own concoctions, which fortunately turned out to be even better than the original.

With all the work she puts in to her home-based business, Erna says she has no plans of expanding. She says she would rather support the businesses of her sons, who know how to cook but have no plans of taking over Hizon's catering.

Elder son Jasper is in the thick of preparations to open a restaurant/bar, Ipanema, in Eastwood City while the younger one, Ronald, loves baking and may consider putting up a bakeshop somewhere down the road.

ERNA Hizon Chua

Wine, other products from rice can bring windfall to provinces

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—Rice, the staple food of majority of Filipinos, can be used for other products that can bring windfall to entrepreneurs and the community in the provinces.

An example of rice-based product which is now deemed as very "promising" in the local as well as international markets is *tapuy* or rice wine.

Called the PhilRice Wine, it is an improvement of the Cordillera *tapuy*.

"It's comparable to the best wine in the market," said Riza Abilgos, senior research specialist of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) here.

PhilRice scientists have conducted a series of experiments for the improvement of the wine for a number of years.

This wine has already been exhibited in Germany and Rome and has earned critical acclaim.

Abilgos said this wine is comparable to the best white wine in taste. It is transparent and sediment-free.

She added that it does not turn sour after long fermentation unlike its traditional version.

The PhilRice *tapuy* has an alcohol content of 15 percent. It comes in 350-ml bottle.

PhilRice officials said entrepreneurs could cash in on this rice wine if they put up a plant that will mass-produce and market it.

They said mass production of this wine does not require very big capital. Cooperatives, they said, can look at this product as a potential big earner as it can also be marketed abroad.

The other result of rice product development by PhilRice is the rice flour that can be used to produce a variety of other products.

The development of the rice flour can now help bring down expenditures for the importation of wheat flour, an important ingredient for baked products.

Small implements for the production of rice flour have already been designed and successfully experimented by PhilRice engineers.

With the implements, housewives in the countryside can now produce their own flour out of unhusked rice.

Food products developed by PhilRice using rice flour are rice pancakes, chiffon cakes, *puto pao*, *espasol*, rice nougat and rice brownies.

Sensory tests of these products were conducted among PhilRice staff, farmers and other groups. Results indicated that these were comparable with the products produced out of wheat flour.

PhilRice conducted seminars for groups of participants, among them housewives, to introduce to them the products and to train them on how to produce these.

One group that used the training was the Rural Improvement Club (RIC) of Talavera, Nueva Ecija. The group is composed of 300 women members and headed by the town's mayor wife, Alma Grace Fausto.

From a capital of only P200, the club members started producing and selling rice nougat, rice brownies and *puto pao*.

In only two months of operation, the members earned P62,000.

Women's groups in other towns of Nueva Ecija have signified interest to duplicate the feat of the RIC of Talavera town.

generation ⓔ business

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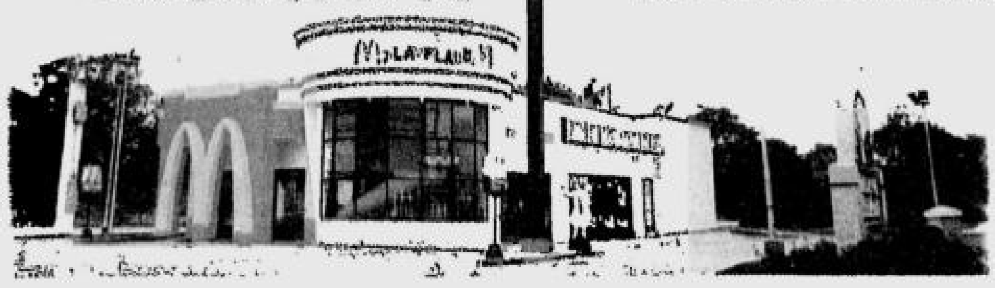

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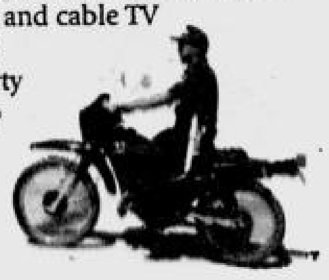

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Trend Spotting

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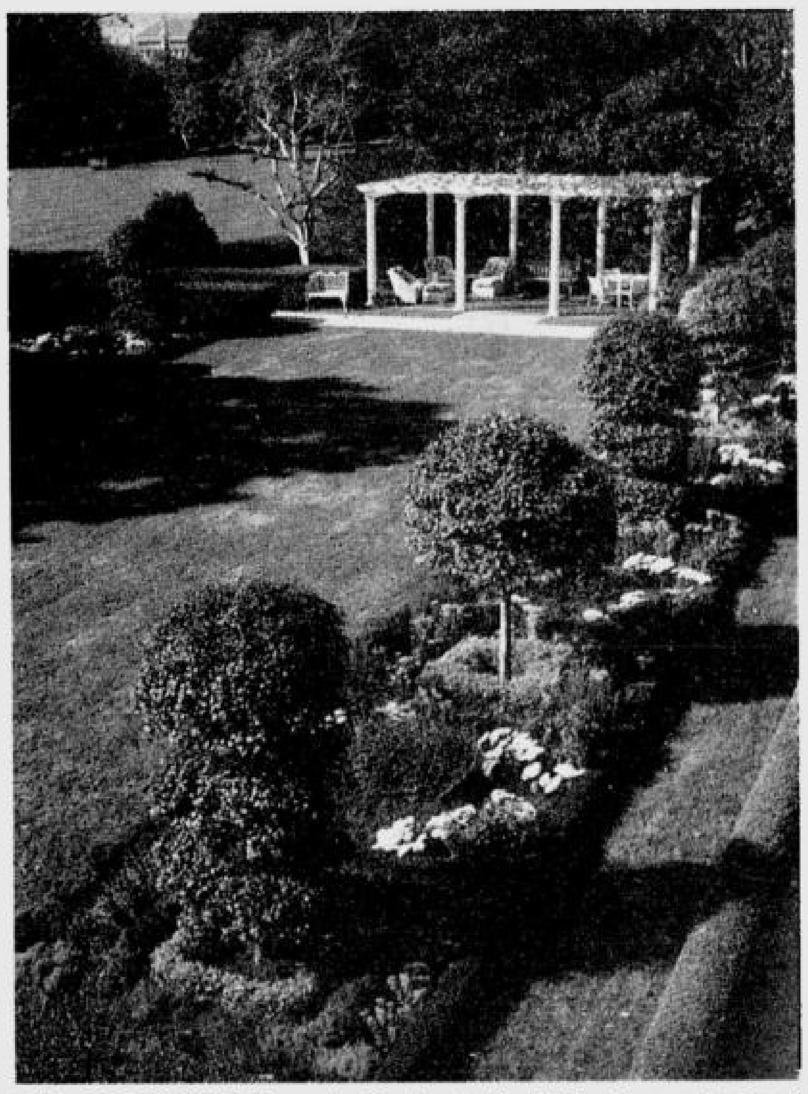
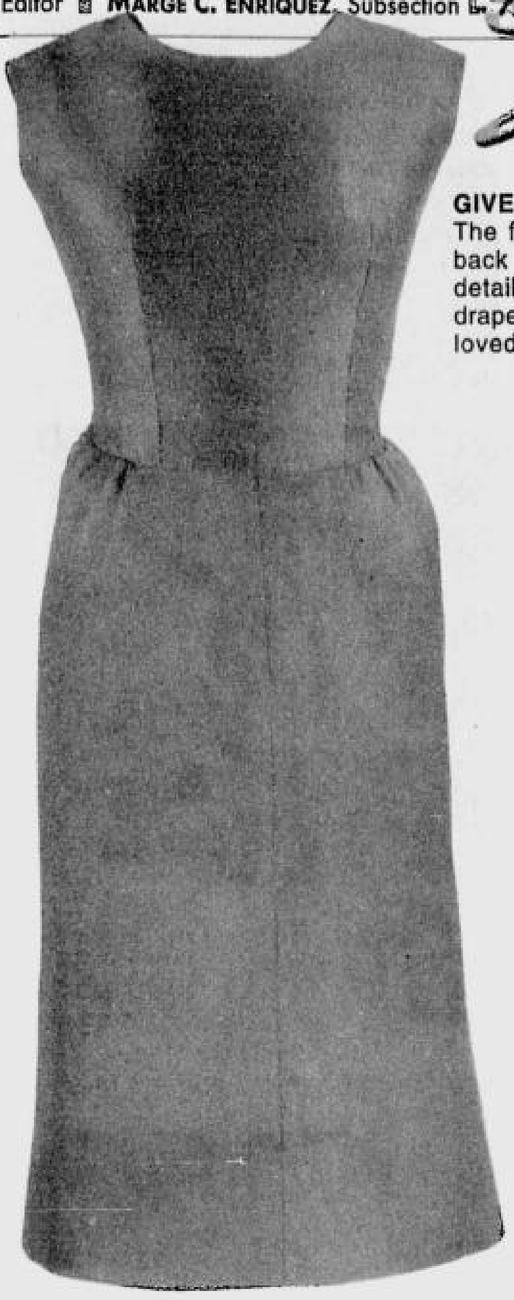


THE JACQUELINE Kennedy Garden in the White House designed by her friend Rachel Lambert Mellon. The restoration of the White House was her contribution, turning it, with its mismatched stuff, into a repository of American arts and history. She was a keen student of the arts and history.

> The long queues show that her mystique remains as strong. The clothes up close show how she used fashion as weapon of state

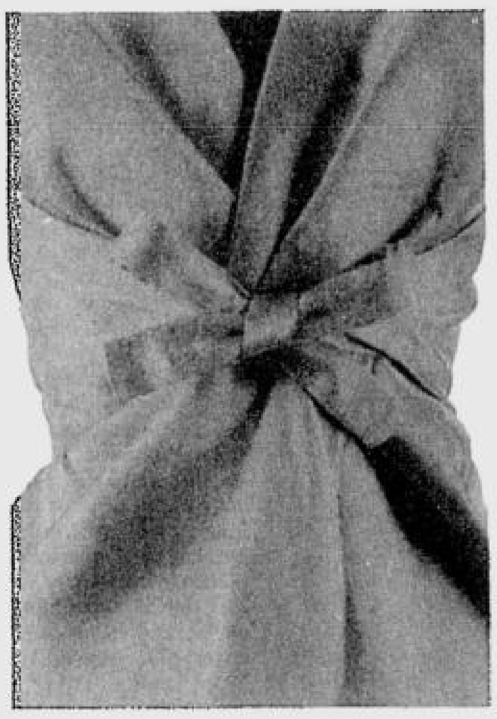


GIVENCHY short evening dress. The front has minimum detail, the back (below, left) has intricate detailing—a complex twist of drapery capped with a bow. Jackie loved subtlety.

Face to face with Jackie's style

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan



NOW, for some diversion from Abu.

I had the luck to see the much-talked-about and written-about **Jackie Kennedy** exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York a few weeks ago, and judging from the daily queues (waiting time: 10-25 minutes) composed of the young and old, Americans and tourists, the Jackie mystique remains as strong today as in the 1960s, seven years after her death. It's true what its curator **Hamish Bowles** wrote—"It's amazing to think that the generation that is now listening to **Britney Spears** would then have been looking to this elegant woman wearing couture clothes."

This exhibit of 80 garments—titled "Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years," to run up to July 29—worn by Jacqueline Kennedy when she was America's first lady and "queen" in the '60s not only kicked off a revival of the Jackie style in fashion, but also generated the sale of a million museum tickets and spawned product spin-offs such as a makeup line, pins, exhibit book and calendar. Even CDs of music played during the Kennedy years in the White House were selling briskly at the exhibit. Why?

Whatever its crises, every era has this self-imposed need for an icon, a style legend, and Jackie Kennedy ("Jackie O" in her later years) didn't wear out her legendary image, unlike **Princess Di**. She chose what to reveal of herself (or her children), unlike Diana, so that the world didn't have a visual overload of her. Instead she guarded her private life fiercely, including her publishing career, so that up to the time of her death, she was in firm control of her image. And through the Kennedy museum and foundation in Boston, she saw to it that long after her death, this management of image—or legacy—is intact. In fact, the garments, accessories and everything else on exhibit at the Met came from the Kennedy museum.

You felt the people's curiosity about Jackie as soon as you joined the queue to the exhibit, and as you walked past the clothes beyond the velvet ropes. The museum visitors, who paid $20/ticket, let out gasps, murmurs as they scrutinized the clothes (without touching them), read the almost scholarly fashion and history notations, viewed the videos of **Jack** and Jackie Kennedy's state visits to France, Mexico or Egypt where you saw and heard this famous couple giving speeches.

At the exit, some even tried to turn around and go back to give the exhibit another once-over, but the guards were always quick to bar them, advising them that once they stepped out of the room, that was it.

Well-curated

In this well-curated exhibit, the bags and fashion accessories used by Jackie in official functions were enclosed in glass displays. Even the White House seating arrangement diagrams in some famous functions were mounted on the walls. As you studied Jackie's brooches, necklaces, you realized that Jackie didn't go for jewelry that cost a fortune—they were faux and well-crafted imitations of classic designs (some commissioned from Tiffany's). She treated jewelry not as investment but as accessories to complement her look.

For Jackie, from beginning to end, was the master of her look.

As the curator Bowles, the US Vogue European editor at large, emphasized in the notes and in the commemorative book, Jackie used her look as the image of her husband's government—clothes and style as the weapon of the state—in a way that no other first lady had succeeded in doing. Yet this deliberateness was done with utmost subtlety and simplicity—which, to my mind, was where our own **Imelda** failed.

Bowles wrote: "The Jackie look was a mix of begloved propriety, discreet historicism and reductive modernity."

It takes the intellectual New Yorker magazine to unmask such simplicity, when in reviewing the exhibit, the noted writer and Jackie's friend **Judith Thurman** (who did the biography of **Isak Dinesen**) wrote: "Like many people who studiously reinvent themselves, Jacqueline Kennedy cultivated the perfect simplicity of manner that is often the grandest of

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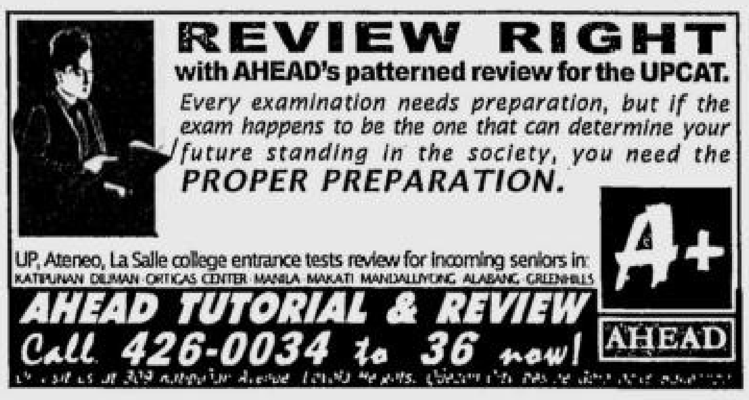
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Out-of-the-ordinary accessories

By Camille Cruz
Photos by Chito Vecina

ABOUT JEWELRY, urbans cannot choose too much of the real stuff. Instead, we can only afford the uniquely hip fancy pieces, such as simple items that have a personality of their own. What we once knew of jewelry is really changing.

It is difficult to spot an accessory that appeals to the eye. It sometimes takes a store's interiors and exteriors to attract the customer. This is the case with Jammin' Gems which has just opened its MTV-style products store.

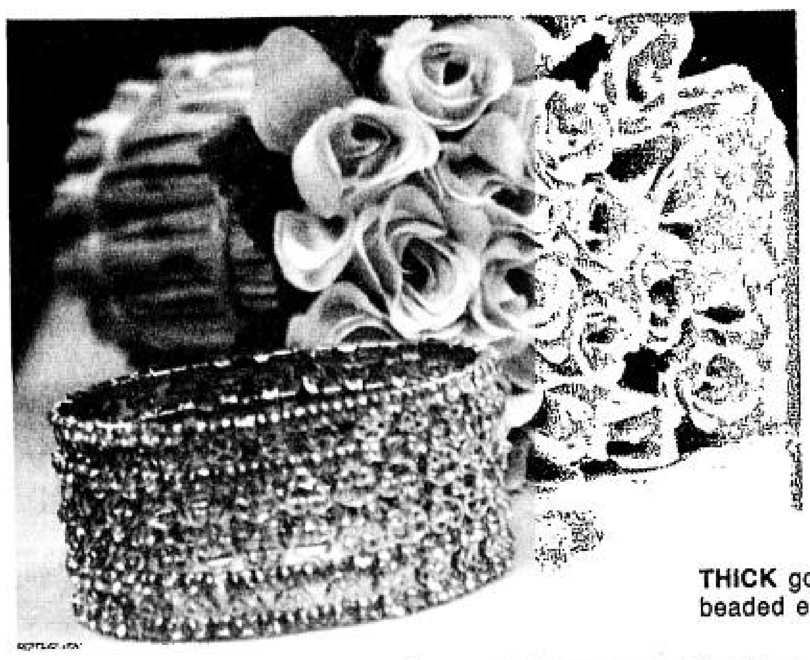
A new kind of accessory that has invaded the market is a mixture of bronze and gold used to create an antique look. When combined using beads, this color scheme melds with the skin tone of the Filipina. It complements the *morena* skin, especially on one wearing light-colored clothing such as white, khaki and beige.

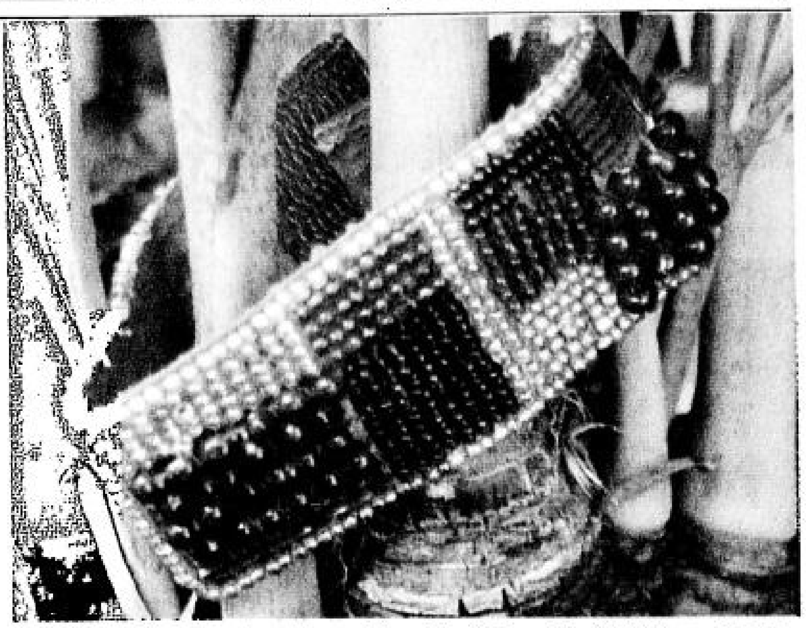
Shades of brown are always interesting. Gold shades mixed with bronze, for example, are a good break from the ordinary. Think of the color of the sunset mixed with rust and a little bit of gold.

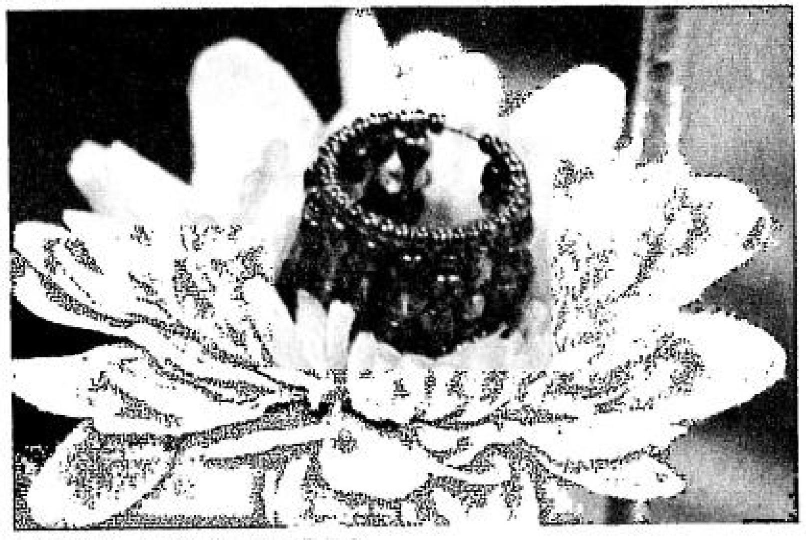
All items available at Jammin' Gems, 2/F Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, Makati City; Call 898-1916.

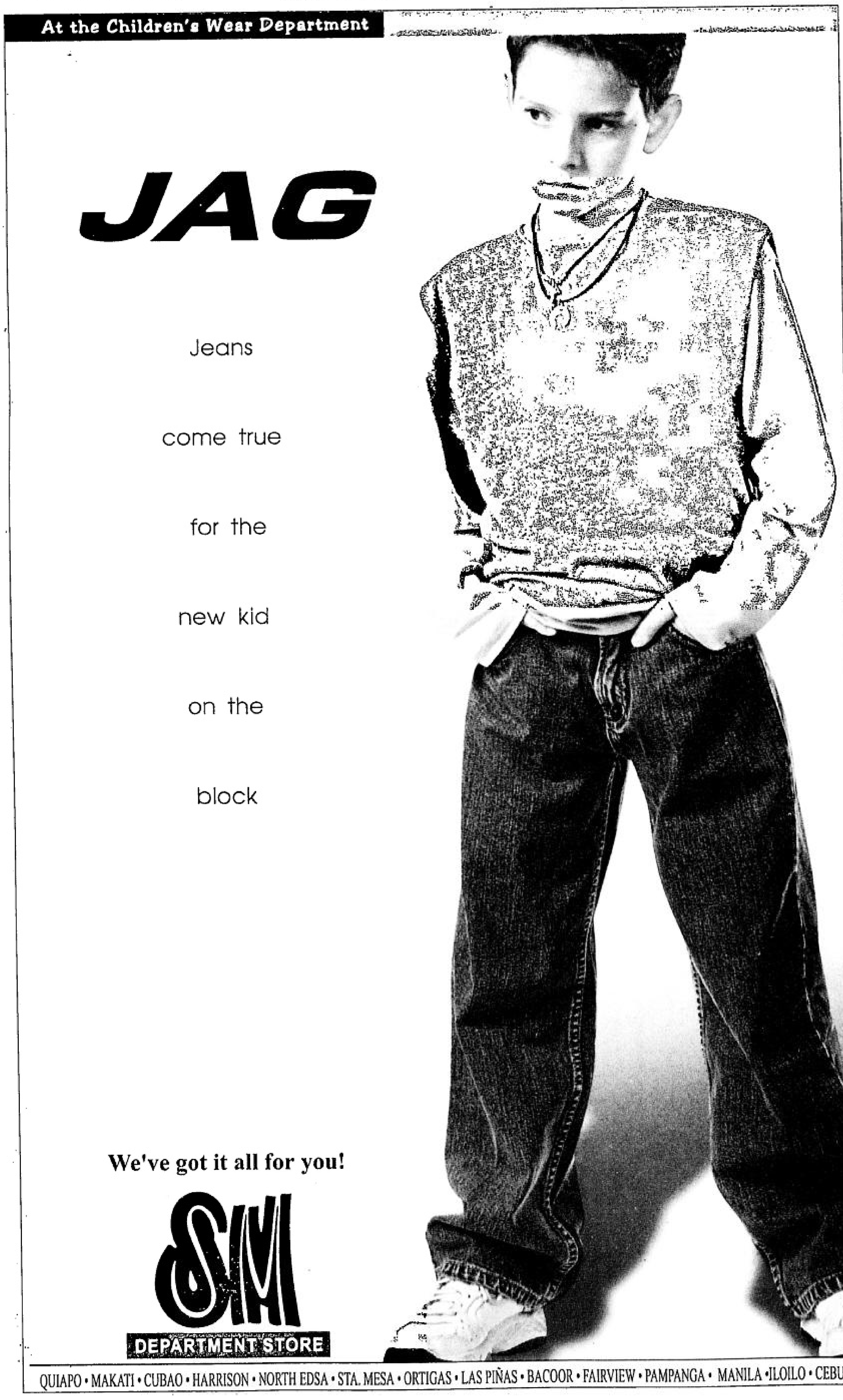
When accessorizing, choose items that fit your skin tone

BLACK leather strap necklace with yellow beaded drop pendant, P735, and brass-looking floral necklace, P760


THICK gold-yellow-based beaded elastic bracelet, P915


BRONZE, brown and gold combined in thick cuff with Velcro closure, P350


CRYSTAL beaded ring, P480

At the Children's Wear Department


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Details and garish drama highlight bridal harvest

By Harriet Ann Dy

IN A COUNTRY where bridal fashion counts for a huge chunk of the made-to-order business, Bill Calubaquib's 91-piece bridal and evening gown collection held recently at Manila Hotel is sure to create a stir in an otherwise incestuous fashion industry.

After all, it is not often that a designer—and a low-key one at that—mounts a big production, complete with song numbers by the talented Marco Sison and the Hiraya Group. It is also rare that a designer publishes his own glossy bridal magazine, as Bill does with Bodasposa (or wedding spouse in Spanish) and give it away to the 300 or so expected guests. Tickets were not cheap; it's been a while since P2,500 tickets for a fashion show were passed around.

His CV is nothing to sneeze at either. A designer-exporter of wedding gowns, Bill has been churning out gowns and evening wear for the last 10 years. A quick phone call to him revealed that he made gowns for a bridal chain, a European royal with his own evening line, and most impressive of all, a major French fashion house. His international exposure also gave him the privilege of undergoing hands-on training in his buyers' factories in Australia and the Netherlands.

Which is why I probably expected more panache in his show. The pretty, miminalist Vera Wang-shaped bridal ball gowns were there; but what was with the polyester satin gloves?

Familiar refrain

Too bad this would be a familiar refrain throughout the hour-long show. The basic silhouettes were there but there was always something that distracted me from the clothes—whether it be a bad fit, lousy models, garish lace details that broke the clean lines of the gowns, loud tiaras, bad jewelry (dangling earrings with heavy chokers, anyone?) or my favorite, polyester satin opera gloves.

There were good moments, of course—a body-hugging lace top with tulle ball-gown skirt, a black evening number with coil detail and matching boa, his milk-colored series with a lacey banded top and flowing skirt with uneven hem. But many more of his creations were only one detail away from earning a stylish nod.

Consider a soft A-line gown with lace bodice. The fit was perfect, the lace and chiffon were soft and romantic, and he could have done with at least one of these elements: rhinestone-studded strap, inch-thick tiara and those darned gloves, but certainly not all three worn together.

Or, the classic strapless gown with ruffle shrug that extended all the way to the train seemed interesting (it's also on the cover of the Bodasposa issue they gave out) but not when paired with heavy mesh earrings and diamond choker. There is a very thin line between garishness and high drama and many of the gowns seesawed between the two poles most of the time.

The evening gowns didn't fare any better. An empire-cut melon number with lace detail was sweet; but a black shimmery number with puffy and

DETAILS/p.C3

SPAGHETTI-STRAPPED gown with tassels

GRECIAN-INSPIRED Jersey off-shoulder gown

CALVIN Klein wrap

SIGNATURE CHECK. Burberry's cotton canvas range

GO logo with Cartier leather tote

Fashion free-falling and shopping at Duty Free

By Margie T. Estrella

This mall for travelers takes a walk on the fashion side with its new Fashion Walk

WHEN it comes to duty-free shopping, most people make their way to where the sour cream-flavored Pringles and Oreo cookies are located. Then off they go to get their year's supply of corned beef and Spam. Several minutes later while patiently waiting at the checkout counter, they realize that they forgot to get one more *pasalubong* for a coworker or relative so they instinctively head for the chocolate section to purchase bags of Hershey's Miniatures and some chocolate-covered macadamia nuts. But does anyone actually think about clothes?

What about them? Shopping for clothes and accessories is not usually a top priority among duty-free shoppers. Those precious two days of duty-free shopping are mainly spent buying imported junk food, certified Angus beef, alcohol and cigarettes. This is quite understandable since the majority of travelers probably finished all their clothes shopping while they were abroad. Furthermore, the clothes that people encountered there weren't exactly at the height of fashion. At least that was what many people thought—or continue to think.

But let it be known that Duty Free does in fact carry a wide variety of apparel for both men and women, not to mention shoes and other accessories that are just as up-to-date in style as their foreign counterparts.

Known as the new fashion department of Duty Free Philippines, Fashion Walk is made up of several sections, which carry anything from apparel to luggage. Fashion Walk presented its Spring-Summer 2001 collection in a show.

Pastel knits paired with capri pants and white linen separate definitely prepare one for warm breezes and hot summer nights. As for the bright colors of spring and summer, they are not limited to clothes.

One can find these brilliant shades on handbags and luggage, too. Shoes for every occasion graced the runway while printed scarves made for a chic cover-up. The good news is they are all currently for sale at Fashion Walk.

Global names

The brands that Fashion Walk carries are among the world's finest.

Top-selling brands such as Salvatore Ferragamo, Cartier, Bally and Burberry are available at a significantly lower cost, while popular clothing brands like Esprit, Benetton, Guess and Girbaud can be purchased at duty-free prices and carry products that may not yet be available in local stores.

Fashion Walk also provides the Filipino traveler with up-and-coming brands like Sequoia, Dimoni and Rodo from Paris and Italy.

In addition, Fashion Walk has dramatically expanded its shoe selection. Gone are the days of shoes that are two or three seasons behind. The footwear section includes the hottest sandals and dressy heels from Nine West, Enzo Angiolini and Bally and comfortable footwear from Naturalizer and Rockport. Men can get heavy-duty boots from CAT or even a great pair of wingtips from Florsheim.

It doesn't end there. Fashion Walk also has collections of the newest bags and accessories. The popular square-shaped totes and baguette bags can easily be found. One can get a reasonably priced purse from Calvin Klein or splurge on a lavish Nina Ricci or Celine leather carry-all. Eyewear, jewelry, cosmetics, perfume and the most recent designs in neckwear are also available.

New image

As mentioned earlier, Duty Free is more likely to be associated with imported food rather than clothes. Its first floor can get pretty crowded at times and the checkout line can get as long as the line in the amusement park. However, there is more to Duty Free. Located on the second floor of Duty Free Philippines Fiesta Mall in Parañaque, Fashion Walk is so set up as to make shopping both fun and convenient. Designer Maja Olivares-Co brought together the freshest boutique designs from around the world and placed it all under one roof. Keeping the traveler in mind, Fashion Walk intends to give foreign tourists and Filipino travelers the opportunity to shop in style. It provides shoppers the chance to shop freely without having to go through the trouble of dragging an overstuffed piece of luggage to the airport when coming from abroad. Fashion Walk is comparable with other fine stores in the United States and Europe. As for the cost of these imported items, Fashion Walk claims its prices are at least 20 percent lower than downtown prices.

Fashion Walk is undeniably a positive addition to duty-free shopping. But these changes are only the beginning. Fashion Walk plans to introduce even more prestigious brands in the coming year and aims to stay on top. What does this mean? Simply put: Rodeo Drive and Rue de Champs-Elysees just became a lot nearer and a whole lot cheaper.

Details and garish drama highlight bridal harvest

(From page C2)

polka-dotted hem and lace went overboard.

Certainly, the shiny polyester feel of the fabrics blinded—especially when mixed with lace, rhinestones and maximalist makeup reminiscent of the '80s. In fact, many of the embellished pieces remind me of the gowns that are usually featured in the ads in the prom special of Seventeen or any teen magazine. Although not sophisticated, they often fulfill the first grownup gown fantasy of some starry-eyed Midwestern teenager.

A big fan of French lace, Italian satin and fabrics like organza and chiffon shantung, Bill admits to being bored with the minimalism favored by local clients. Most of his gowns have a princess-like effect both for fantasy and practical purposes—the A-line shape is very friendly to the body.

But, as makeup artist Marlon Rivera is wont to say, who's to argue with success? Marketing himself as an "alternative designer," the bridge brand between Inno Sotto and the *modista* next door definitely helps. His gowns start at P25,000. He does an average of six brides and 40 evening gowns a month and his Parañaque shop has flourished through the years.

Then again, taste is subjective. I'm not a big fan of embellishments and would rather keep them to an elegant minimum but it seems many of today's brides and debutantes wouldn't think twice about wearing giant bows, dog collars and gloves. It's just too bad because from a fashion standpoint, Bill's gowns reflect several elements of imported gowns (Vera Wang easily comes to mind) like the perfect pouf and the easy silhouettes. For most part, his gowns also fit snugly into the models' bodies.

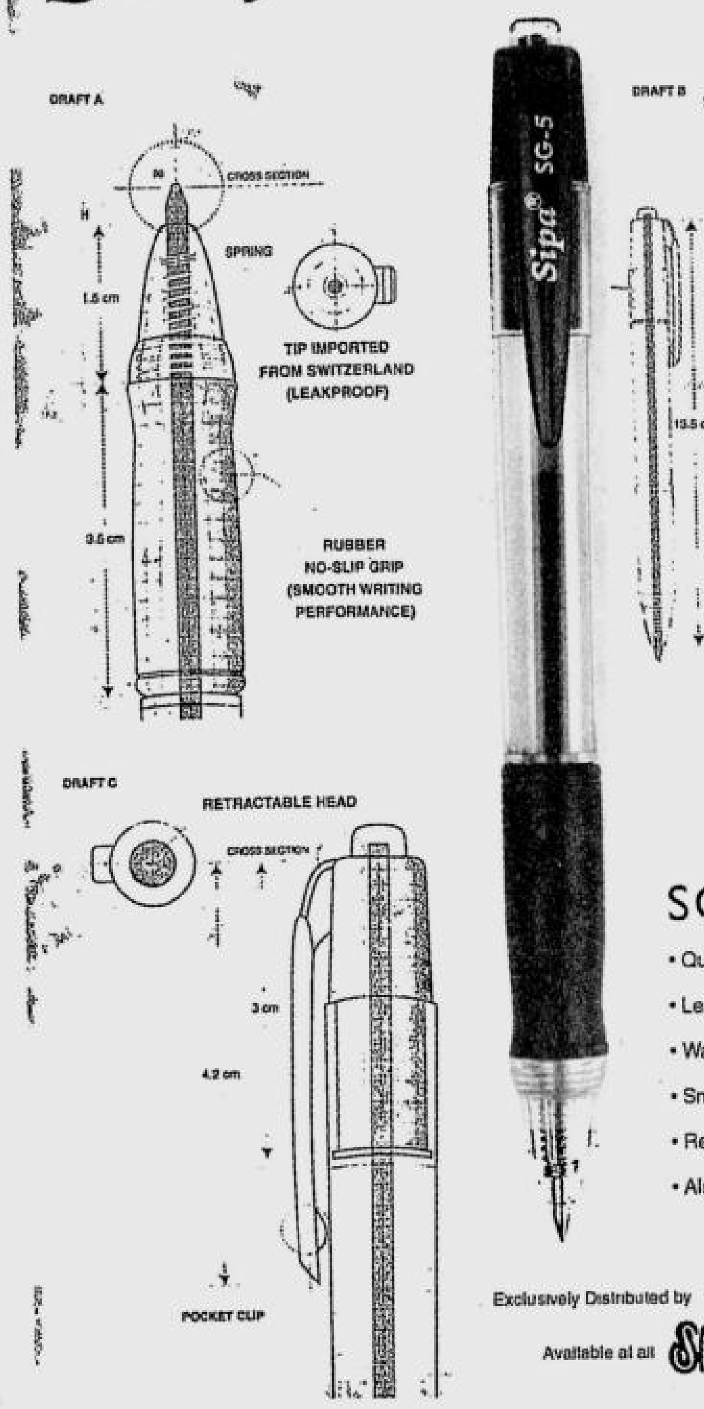
So what's his ideal wedding gown? "I like something very soft, working on chiffon and dupioni silk because it's the lightest silk."

E-mail the author at chinachix-@hotmail.com.

Low-key Bill Calubaquib's gowns reflect several elements of imported gowns like the perfect pouf and the easy silhouettes

EMPIRE halter with lace, inspired by lingerie

SABRINA-NECKLINED bridal gown with panelled skirt



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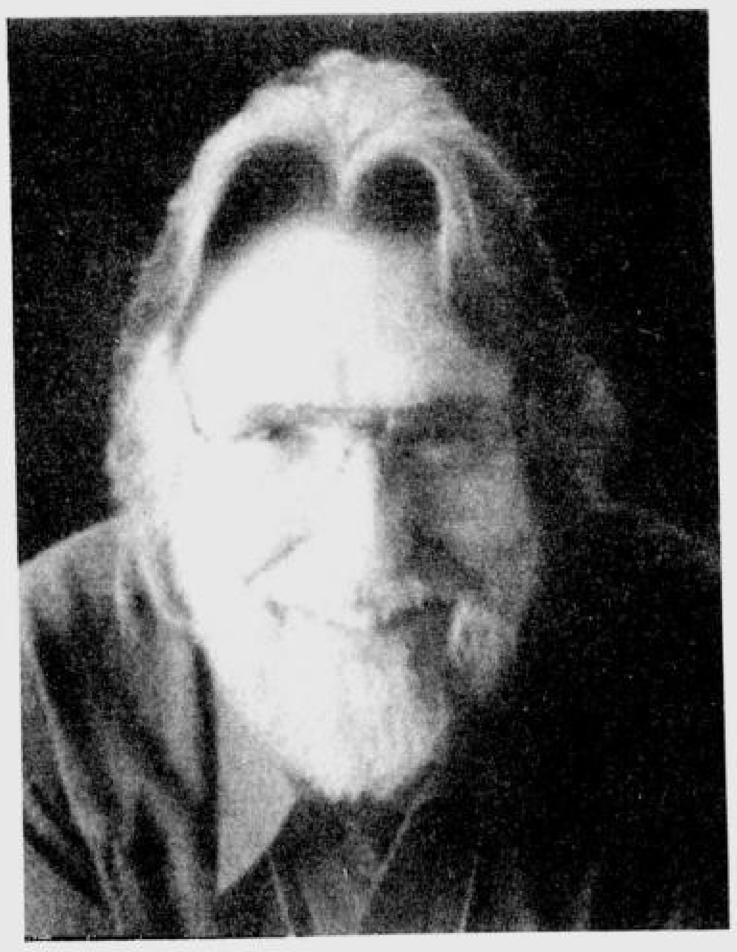

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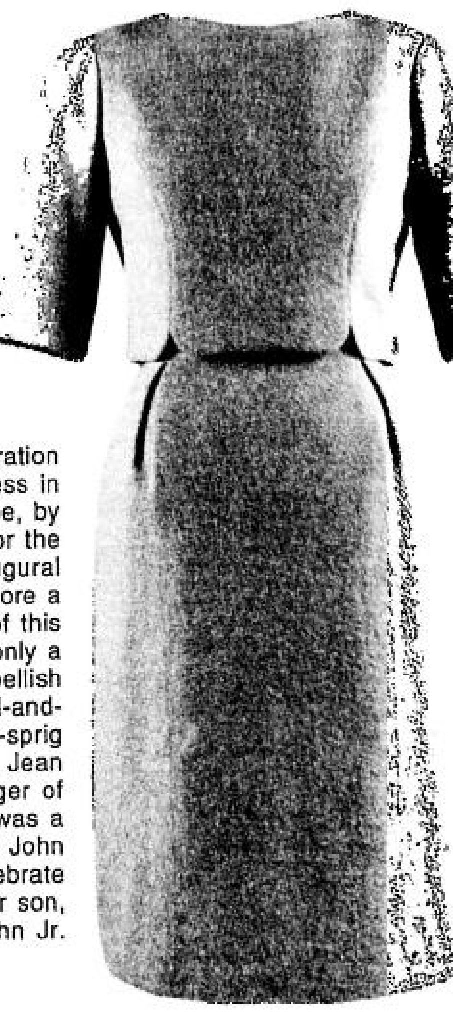
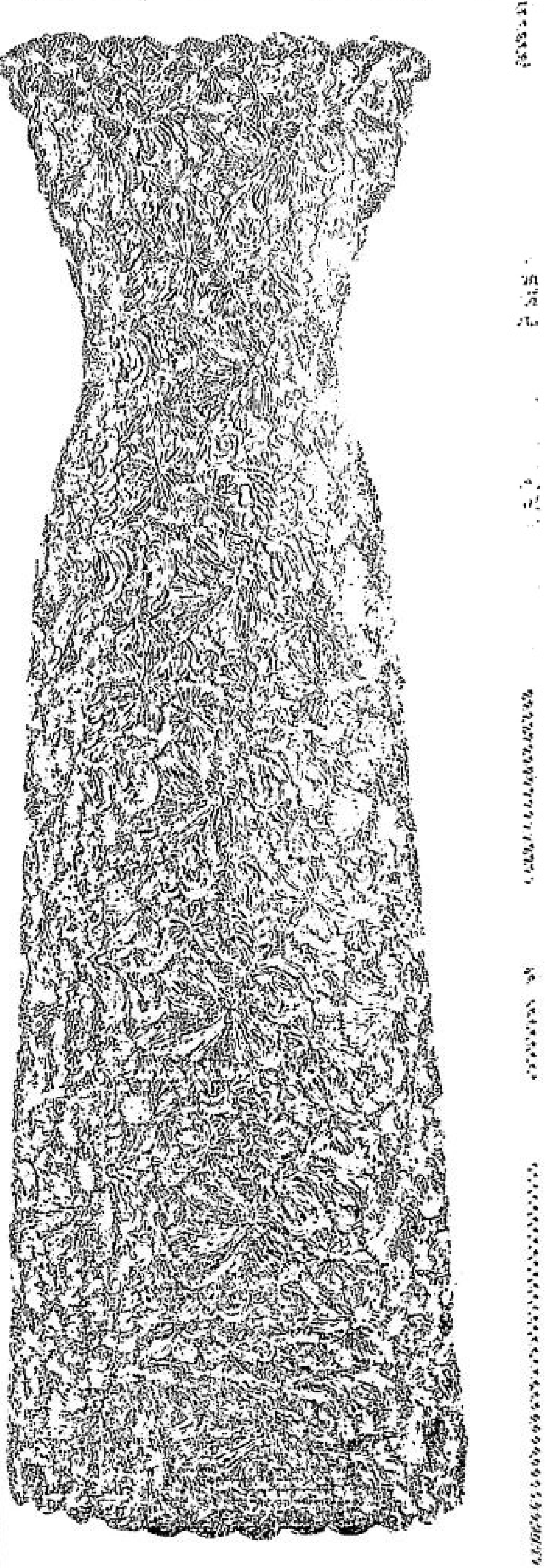


HER inauguration over-blouse dress in beige wool crepe, by Oleg Cassini. For the post-inaugural luncheon, she wore a slender variant of this dress, using only a brooch to embellish it—a diamond-and-ruby berry-sprig design by Jean Schlumberger of Tiffany's. It was a gift from John Kennedy to celebrate the birth of their son, John Jr.

JACKIE and then Sen. John Kennedy in 1959. Jewelry to her was no investment but just fashion accessory.



OLEG Cassini silk crepe gown is proof of Jackie's preference for columnar gowns.

Face to face with Jackie's style

(From page C1)

affectations."

However, the world never chose to see such affectations or Jackie's fastidious effort in creating her style. What we chose to see was its effect on us—the woman connecting to every woman, and even men. For instance, when Jackie wore the now-famous black veil that hid her face as the casket of an assassinated president was paraded on the street, a young **John John** holding her hand, the world felt empathy, and grieved with her. Little did we know that Jackie, in designing her fashion, was an astute student of ceremony, her husband's funeral included.

New frontier

The entrance to the exhibit summarized Jackie's contribution to the image-building of America: she bridged the '50s America to JFK's new frontier. Not only through her clothes but more so by her restoration of the White House, she moved America from its parochial orientation—into a sense of pride for its history, culture and the arts. In short, she gave a patrician touch to a rich but nouveau America.

The exhibit began with her campaign clothes leading to the inaugural where she did away with the trademark overcoat of first ladies and instead wore an Oleg Cassini A-line swing coat in neutral beige—a standout among the other prominent wives who were in jewel colors—and had the pillbox hat she would be known for. In choosing such a youngish design, she was to convey vigor that she wanted her husband's administration to be known for.

What the exhibit and its literature revealed was that Jackie painstakingly designed her look, while being smartly sensitive to its political implications. Even if she was a lover of Paris couture, lapping up the designs of Chanel, Balenciaga and Givenchy, she knew she had to tap American designers (who hadn't yet arrived on the scene, so to speak) for her husband's campaign was largely supported by the garments association.

So with the help of the legendary Vogue editor **Diana Vreeland**, Jackie gave specific written instructions to the American designers, led by the old Kennedy friend **Oleg Cassini**, as to the French-inspired designs she wanted, so much so that the press noted that some of these were copies of classic French designs.

It was written that in 1960, Vreeland got a 10-page handwritten letter from Jackie asking the editor's advice: "There have been several newspaper stories and lots of letters about me wearing Paris clothes, and **Mrs. Nixon** running up hers on the sewing machines. Just remember I like terribly simple, covered-up clothes. The nearest to Balenciaga and Givenchy or Chanel velvet suits. I hate prints."

For such efforts, Vreeland, who was then editor of Harper's Bazaar, was given an exclusive **Richard Avedon** shoot of the new First Family for her magazine's 1961 issue—a feat which left the rival Vogue ballistic.

Intelligent minimalism

Even given this historical background trivia, the exhibit showed Jackie's firm taste for simplicity and minimalism in clothes, with intelligent choice of accents, be they beading or the use of fur. Her clothes were sleek and free of clutter. She went for solid colors—peach, yellow, fuchsia, blue. The only outstanding exception she made when it came to prints was the ornate silk brocade she had Manhattan designer **Joan Morse** make into a gown, for the brocade was a gift from Saudi Arabian **King Saud**.

She preferred her gowns to be "columnar"—supple, lean, straight like a Greek column—and Cassini's blue gown with a ribbon at the empire waist was among the most photographed gowns in the exhibit.

Her day dresses were unencumbered—sleeveless to show her lean arms, sabrina to project her collarbone—usually with a ribbon or bow at the waist, or big buttons.

She was a master of subtlety—while her gown's bodice was lined with beads, she'd use a capelet to hide it so that the TV cameras caught only a glimpse of the ornamentation.

Jackie knew "less is more" decades even before it became a fashion dictum to today's women. Studying the exhibit, you understood why Jackie's classic chic and minimal modernism still connect to today's women.

And what was curious was how the museum curatorship adhered to such understated style. For instance, so as not to distract the eye from the clothes, the mannequins' wigs were made of gossamer white cloth shaped into the trademark Jackie bob.

In designing her image, you realized her edge over Diana.

Thurman wrote it well: "Unlike Diana, who so touchingly, heretically and stupidly believed she was entitled to be an individual, Jackie acquiesced in becoming a symbol."

Myth

Thurman revealed that it was Jackie who created Camelot when, a week after Kennedy's assassination in 1963, she told **Theodore White** in an interview that "at night, before we'd go to sleep, Jack liked to play some records" and that the song he loved most was that from Camelot. In fact, Thurman quoted another biographer, Jack Kennedy's taste in music was "pretty much limited to 'Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home.'" There was no Camelot in the early 1960s, and John Kennedy himself would have been the first to kick such notions out of the window.

Well, Camelot or Bill Bailey, the legend has been bought by generations. The New Yorker's Thurman also noted that excluded from the exhibit was the memorable Chanel suit Jackie wore when her husband was shot in Dallas, the suit splattered with blood in a photo now etched in the modern world's visual memory. But then Thurman said the Metropolitan exhibit went for iconic images, not realism.

It is interesting that at the exhibit's exit was Jackie's original letter written in 1975 to New York Mayor **Abe Beame**, pleading with him to save the Grand Central Station for it was a historical and cultural landmark to Americans. In that handwritten and brief letter, she interceded for the generations to come—"Is it not cruel to let our city die by degrees?" This New York landmark was saved on her behalf.

In her twilight years, Jackie had no mind for fashion or style—she didn't want to be known as a clotheshorse—she came to be known for causes, as did her children.

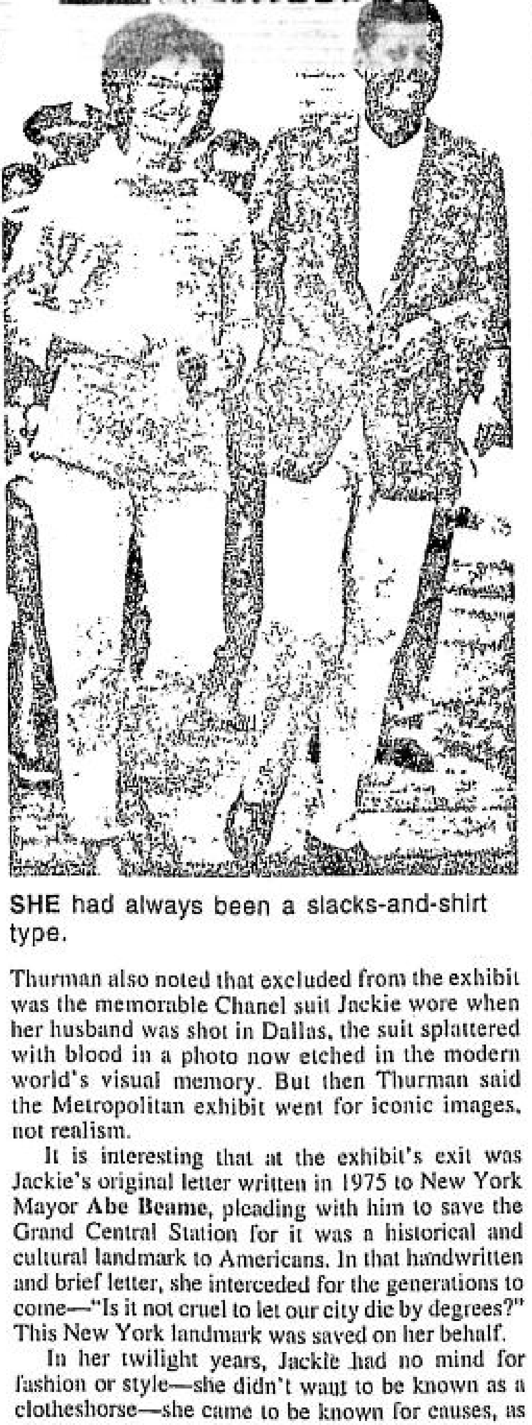
Indeed in her youth, she knew how to use style. In her old age, she learned how to use power.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@skyinet.net

JACKIE wore this Oleg Cassini evening dress in pink and white raffia lace with matching stole to that famous state visit to Paris, where she won the hearts of the French and their president, Charles de Gaulle.

DAY dress in silk shantung shows her taste for minimalist modern design.

JACKIE wore this Chanel suit for at least seven years, on day and night occasions. The suit is a black ribbed wool, with blouse in ivory dot-embroidered silk satin. The jacket is lined with the same fabric as the blouse, and the blouse's cuffs are trompe l'oeil (an illusion)—the blouse is actually sleeveless.



SHE had always been a slacks-and-shirt type.

THIS Oleg Cassini ivory gown with embroidered jet beads on the bodice was worn with a capelet to hide the bodice upon her arrival at a state dinner.

WE heard from the grapevine that Cesar Gaupo has been named chief designer of Shanghai Tang's couture collection. The clothes, mostly classics and beaded, are made in the Philippines but will be sold in New York and London.

Gaupo will present his clothes for the 2002 spring/summer collection in the Hong Kong Fashion Week in July. In September, he will present his clothes in the New York Fashion Week.

Gaupo has been making clothes for Myla Javier, a model turned exporter. She is the wife of John Aexel, the CEO of Shanghai Tang, which is now owned by a French company. She wore Gaupo's clothes in the New York opening of the Shanghai Tang store and in other big parties.

David Tang, founder of Shanghai Tang, and other bigwigs admired Myla's clothes and asked who her designer was. Myla said it was Gaupo. Since there was an opening for a designer at Shanghai Tang, the management looked into Gaupo.

Brahma Kumaris offers inspirational courses

GOINGS-ON

BRAHMA Kumaris Meditation Center offers free programs. Topics include "Know Your Future" (June 23) and "Stress-Free Living Course" (June 30) at Inner Space, 7484 Bagtikan corner Dao Streets, San Antonio Village, Makati City. Another set of lectures to be held at 34 T. Gener corner Kamuning Streets, Kamuning Road, QC, are "The Power of Positive Thoughts" (June 23) and "Inner Powers" (June 30). Call 890-7960.

CONCERT. The University of Santo Tomas Singers will hold a send-off concert titled "MuseoMusica" on June 22 and 23, 7 p.m., at the UST Museum, mezzanine of the UST Main Building. Repertoire includes classics, madrigals, Filipino folk, classic and contemporary songs.

After eight years and seven international tours, the UST Singers are set to fly on a month-long tour of the Pacific on June 25. Call 536-6373 or (0917) 911-8011.

SALE. A community "cleaning out" sale will be held tomorrow at the Center for Health and Creative Arts (Chacra), 144 B. Gonzales St., Loyola Heights, QC. On sale are home and office furniture, books and household items. The sale will be preceded by a workshop on "Simplifying your Life" tonight. Call 434-5381 or 426-5368.

CONCERT. The author of "Conversations with God," a bestseller book, will visit Manila and you are about to have a conversation with Neale Donald Walsch tomorrow, 6 p.m., at the Meralco Theatre. Call 426-5375/3208, 929-0239 and 531-3340.

ANNIVERSARY SHOW. The Metro Manila Community Orchestra will hold its first anniversary concert on June 27, 6 p.m., at the Miriam College Mini Forest Park.

WORKSHOP. The Society of Filipino Archivists Inc. will hold a seminar-workshop on "Disaster Preparedness and Recovery" on June 27-29 at the Palm Plaza, Pedro Gil corner M. Adriatico Street, Malate, Manila. Call 920-9060 and 932-7195.

SEMINAR. Filipino students who wish to pursue undergraduate studies in the United States can gain access to American colleges and universities through a seminar and exhibit on educational prospects in the US on June 29, 6-9 p.m., at the SGV Ballroom, Aim Acceed Center, Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 819-1001/02.

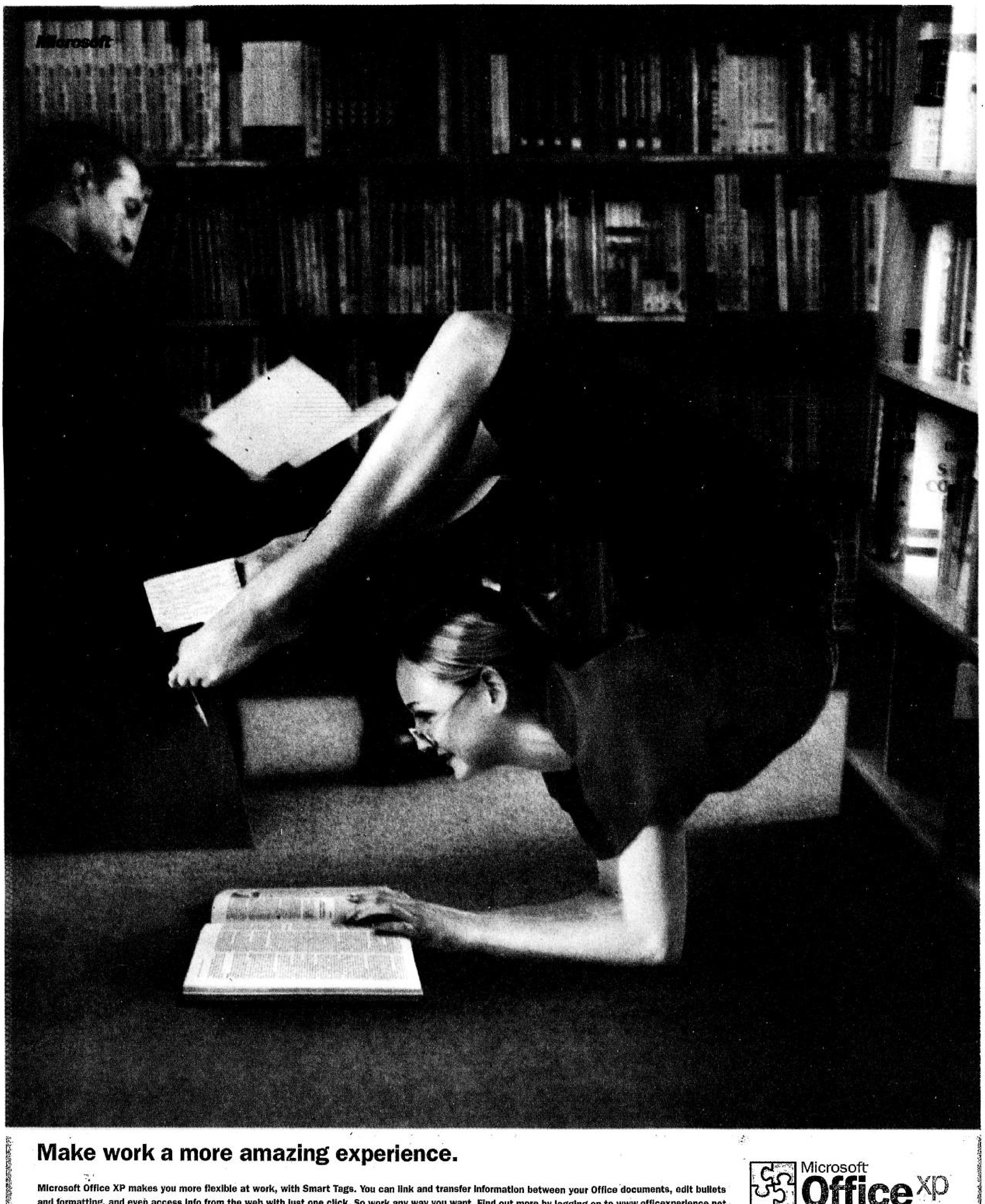
RETREAT. Contemplative Outreach Philippines offers an introduction to centering prayer retreat on July 6, 7 and 8 at Bl J. Marello Retreat House, Tagaytay City. Call 817-7251, 633-6115, 842-0201 and 843-8292.

MIDYEAR SALE. The Ayala Museum Shop holds its midyear sale until July 15. Avail of up to 75-percent discount from the prices of existing products inspired by the museum's special exhibitions and permanent collections, everything from stationary items to bags. Call 812-1191 to 97 local 122.

UST Singers

WORKSHOP. The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists will conduct a three-day seminar-workshop on "Emerging Technologies, Trends, Issues on Library and Archival Management" on July 4-6 at Tagaytay Country Hotel, E. Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City. Call 929-9180, 897-8808 local 330 and 527-9672.

TRAINING WORKSHOP. If you are in any type of leadership position, you are invited to the "21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" training-workshop. Sponsored by Center for Empowered Leadership on July 7 at the Walter Hogan Building, ISO Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC. Call 415-8713 or 372-9265.



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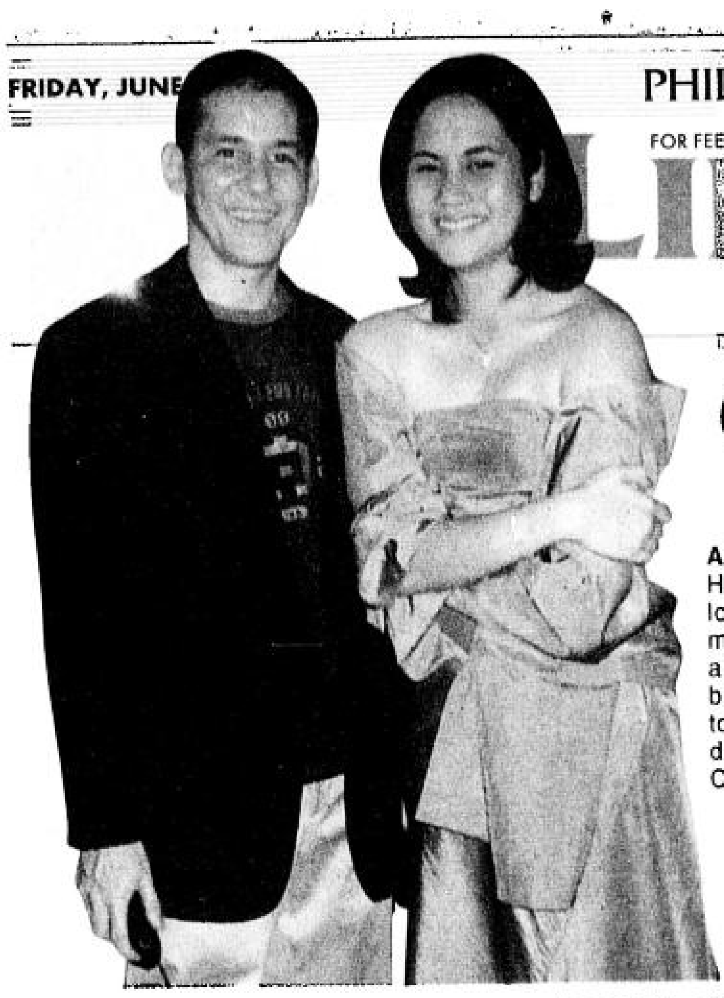

ATOM Henares looks more like a big brother to his daughter, Crystal.

Chuck the age gap

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

HOW old is old and how young is young?

We live in a time when age, gender and social barriers are breaking down. Twenty years ago, anyone over 35 was "old." Today you see fiftysomethings buying shirts at Human and Oxygen. The hippies of the '70s may have greying hair and wrinkles, but they don't act a day over 18.

Middle age has become "middle youth." The generation after the war was the first official "teenagers." Now even after 50, they still act young. Besides there have been no important sociocultural changes to compare with what occurred in the '60s. So, the kids of baby boomers have inherited their parents' attitudes.

In Manila's social scene, there are a lot of professionals of a certain age who epitomize this new mood. Intensity is the name of their game, spending an equal amount of time at the boardroom discussing strategies with colleagues and at the gym doing the treadmill. If not pumping iron at the gym or practicing yoga, they are hitting the ball at the tennis court, or putting at the driving range. At night they shift gears and head over to dinner parties or the bars and clubs, enjoying the night out at the city's hot, young scene.

These people, chameleons that they are, can get away with almost anything and everything they wear—be it hot pink stockings worn with micro mini skirts or body-hugging white muscle shirts for men. They are called Gen Flex, as in Generation Flexible.

This demographic of baby boomers and beyond who transcend all ages, are into the "finer things in life"—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. They work hard, and they play even harder. If we think that GenX is a potential market because of its spending power, we are wrong. It is actually from the Gen Flex that they get their money.

How does one become a member of Generation Flexible? "Everyone somehow goes through a state of getting stuck at their prime," said Atom Henares, the pioneering dynamo behind rock radio giant NU107 and industrial biggie, Pilipinas Palm Oil. "In their minds, they feel it is their coolest state, so they want to stay there."

In MTV speak, that state is called "the zone"—that magical phase of wonder, idealism and excitement between 18-25 that is described in marketing lingo as "aspirational." Those who have experienced this age group once, can plug into it again, regardless of how they old they are.

Mid-age complacency

"From watching the news and wearing the same dark suits to eating at a particular time, life sometimes becomes too predictable. It makes you rigid through time. You tend to lose your flexibility when you've adapted to this routine. A paradigm shift is essential," said Henares. This is the guy who wore tight-fitting shirts before any male in Manila.

But getting stuck in one's zone is not what Gen Flexers are all about. Instead of getting frozen, these Gen Flexers break out of that mold, making a bold statement, saying to the world, "I evolve."

> Whether you're of the Gen Flex or the GenX, what matters is that you break out of the mold and make a bold statement

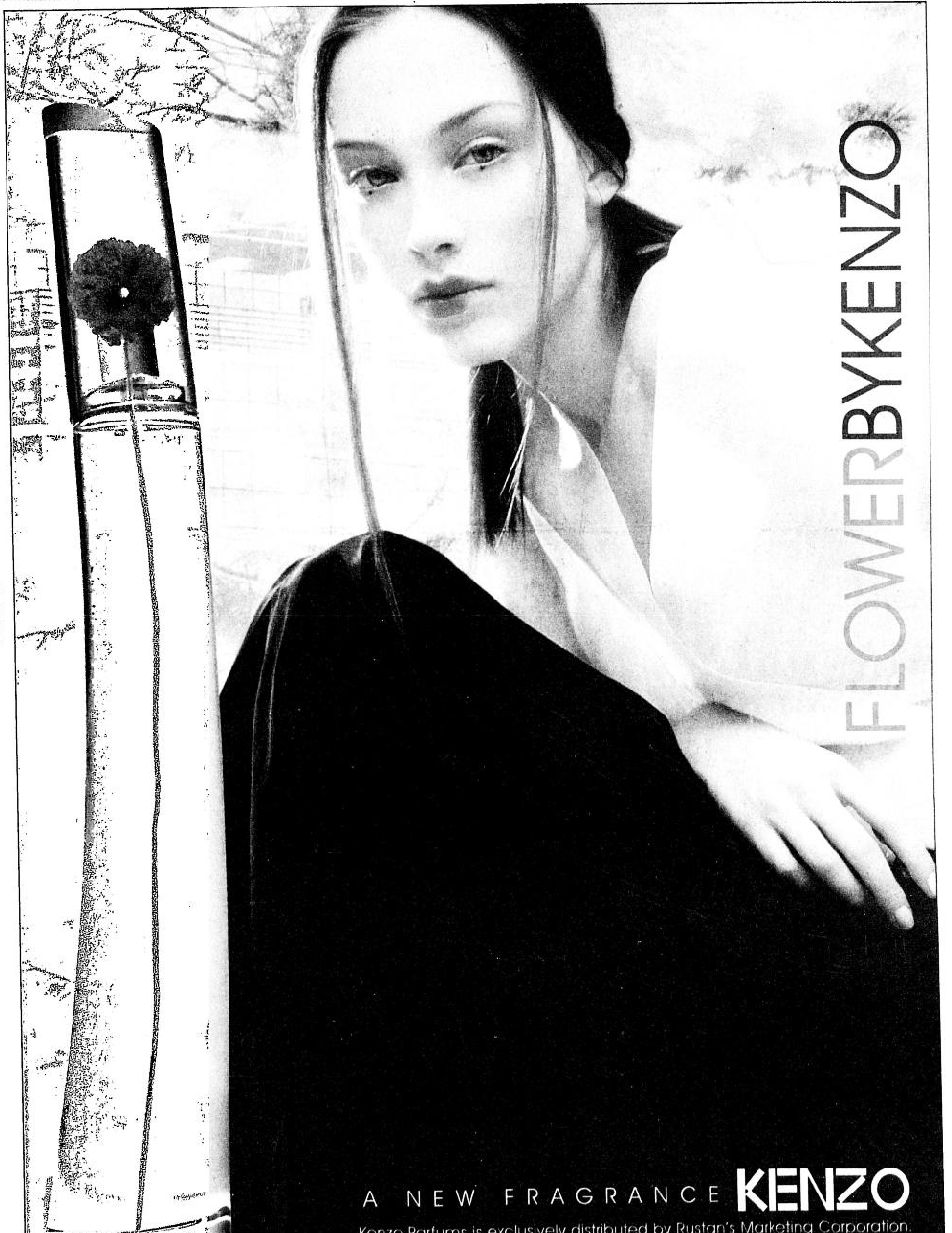
"It is all about the attitude and mental framework," opined fortysomething lawyer and former press undersecretary Mike Toledo who, at the time of the interview, was about to get a haircut at Franck Provost.

Wearing shiny black Dolce and Gabbana shades and a nicely fitted lime green shirt, he makes it easy for one to deduce that he works out. "I go to the gym three times a week. I think you owe it to others and to yourself to be physically fit," he said.

Mary Ann Tinio, savvy scene style setter, does Pilates and taebo regularly with younger exercise mates to keep fit. Then she attends fashion galas and social events (with her daughters) clad in her funkiest best—from hot, hot pants to micro minis, animal prints and gold bangles—carrying her look as fresh as the models on the catwalk.

CHUCK/p.D2

MARY Ann Tinio revives the Pucci printed shirt and hot pants that was popular in her teenage years.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Chuck the age gap

(From page D1)

MIKE Toledo off-hours

This is a woman who started wearing Japanese-inspired fashion way before animé became a craze.

Another astounding example of this genre is Maribel Dario. From being the belle of the ballroom dancing hall, she has extended her presence to the club scene, assisting her sons Teddy and star DJ Manolet Dario in promoting NBK raves. You would see her at the gate of dance clubs past the velvet ropes, going over guest lists and throwing air kisses to her and her children's friends.

"Good evening, Tita," rave scencsters would greet her respectfully at the door. "Hurry up, the DJ just started his set!" she would answer nonchalantly, signaling us to hasten our steps and enter the packed club.

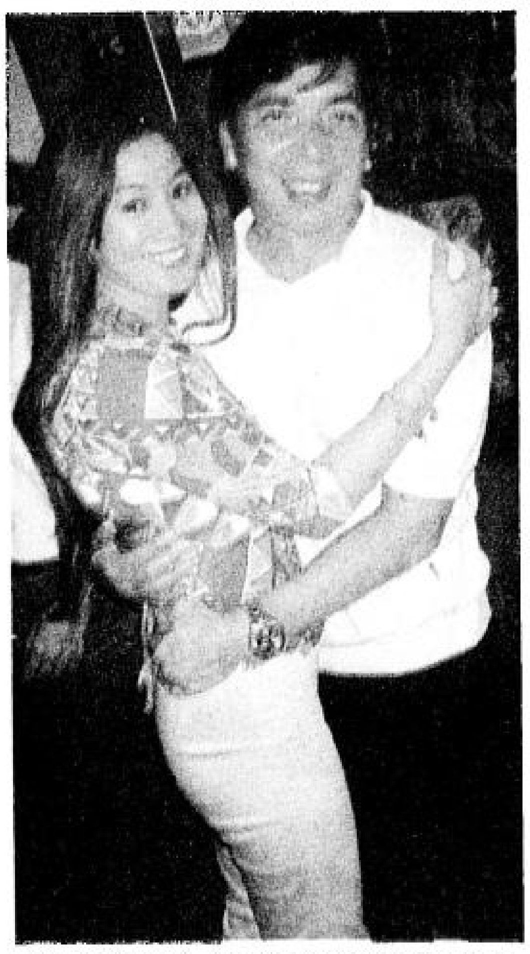
One time, she even did the finale during the fashion gala of top clubwear designers Mimi and Juliet Tan at the former ABG's. Her presence elicited the wildest applause.

I overheard our home and fashion subsection editor declare, "I'm a baby boomer. I believe that the older you are, the better you become."

As Henares put it, "When one reaches that state, one must push beyond their comfort zones to continuously achieve diversity—your style unfolds."

Henares, whose background stretches from Ivy League (Harvard, no less) to finance, recalled how his colleagues would all wear the same dark suits. At that time, the hot club was Faces, and everyone was in black.

His brother took him out shopping and got him a golden coat from Rustan's. He felt weird about it at first, but that same year, he went to Cote d'Azur in the south of France and was blown away with what people were wearing on the beach—red and light blue suits along the shores while mingling with people in sexy swimwear.



LOUIE Ysmael, the progenitor of Manila's vibrant night life, and his young wife Cecile

Seeing the unique sense of individuality on the island, he then realized that "you have to inject your own style in whatever it is you're doing." These insights proved to be useful when he put up his radio station. After being at the top of the heap, Henares now has his sights set on television.

With white shirt and tie as basic attire for lawyers, Toledo (who was chair of a bus company at 29 before becoming legal consultant for the government) would go against the norm and wear something more colorful. "I would wear pink, salmon, even violet shirts, depending on my mood." This even before sartorial color for men became the vogue.

Balancing act

Gen Flexers believe that life is a balance of elements. They consider their work or career as an integral part of their lives, but they know that there are things more important than money. They enjoy life in various forms—from engaging in sports, listening to great music, reading good books, clubbing, meditating, etc.

"Because once you forget these things, you'll lose track of what's important in your life," Toledo said with a youthful smile. "You have to actively seek diversity. Travel is also a good way to broaden perspectives."

More words of wisdom from Henares: "Lastly, pursue extreme points of view because they help define the middle ground."

Remember, to age is not a problem, but with problems, you age.

MARIBEL Dario makes merry.

BOHEMIAN Peachy Prieto and Leica Carpo

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Vain and vintage

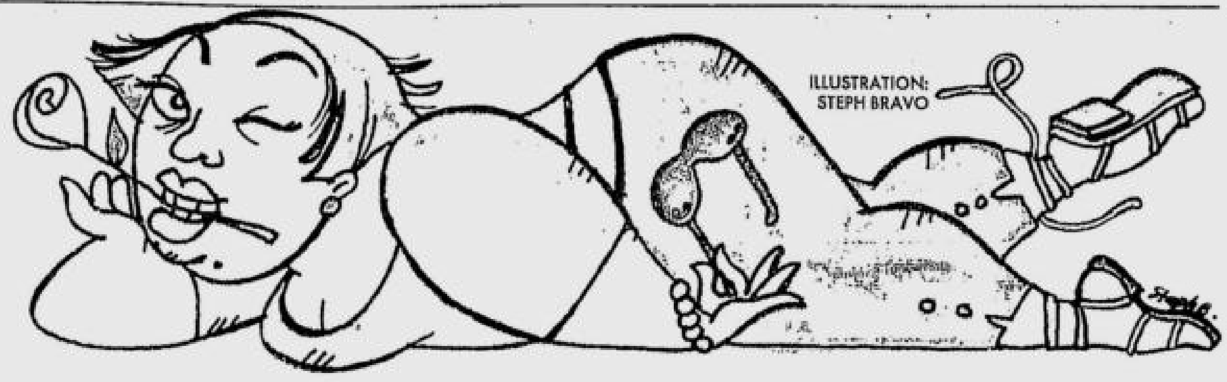


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Age has got nothing to do with the wrinkles on your face but the spirit you kindle in your heart. Wow! That really sounds like a lot of crap

By Jose Javier Reyes

A FRIEND of mine, in a moment of utmost resignation, captured it all. He said that there are really three phases in life. The first is when you have all the time, all the energy, but no money. This is followed by that stage when you have all the energy, all the money, but no time. The last node is when you all the money, all the time, but no energy.

Yes, that's the process of aging. No, there is a more politically correct term: going through life's irreversible process.

So many discussions, so many theories and even more firsthand experiences about midlife crisis have been immortalized in books and woeful conversations. Sure, you know you've hit middle age not by the manic refusal to reveal the number of birthdays you have had in this lifetime, but when your bulging middle ceases to qualify as baby fat. You know that you've gone past the halfway mark when almost every year you have to go the ophthalmologist to have your eyes examined. You have lost the right to be called a young adult and simply plunk into the category of responsible citizen. You're not quite there to be pigeonholed as a senior citizen but you can no longer pass for the proverbial spring chicken.

Regaining lost time

But what is so bad about aging, really? Everyone—from pauper to prince—must undergo life's charted course. Aside from the fact that you can no longer have the gall or the stamina to last an entire night standing and trying to look sexy and available in the bars of Libis, Pasig, it isn't really so bad. If you can go on with your life without being obsessed with menopause, hiding traces of a receding hairline and a widening forehead, or being accused by anyone 15 years younger of being a breathing museum piece, then you will be all right.

The only pain comes from the options you have missed out or when you start fantasizing about the big ifs in your life. "What if I went that way and not taken this route?" "What if I decided to be a professional bungee jumper or an MTV VJ instead of being this golf-playing, suburban sweet potato whose concept of a good time is a backyard barbecue or giving my pet dog a bath on weekends?"

The even bigger pain follows when you start trying to regain lost time, attempting to regain the irretrievable and consciously go into mental and social remission. No amount of scientific miracles, workouts or cosmetic operations can bring back that all-too temporary pleasure of being young and reckless. Any attempt to look, behave or go into complete being of someone 20 years younger than the age declared on your birth certificate is called an exercise in futility. If you haven't realized that the fountain of youth is as real and true as Santa Claus, then you should go see another kind of doctor very, very soon.

What is wrong with savoring all of your years? By the time you hit 40, you are old enough to know how bad it can get, but still strong enough to hope for the better days to come. If you have a well-functioning mental system, you have learned the rules of most of the games in life—whether in business or romance. You have come to accept that there are as many faces as there as assholes. It is only a matter of knowing which side of the person to see. You are familiar with all the shades of gray—comfortable with the fact that the world is not and can never be subdivided into black or white. You can smile at the thought that life is unfair. And you have convinced yourself that you can't have everything.

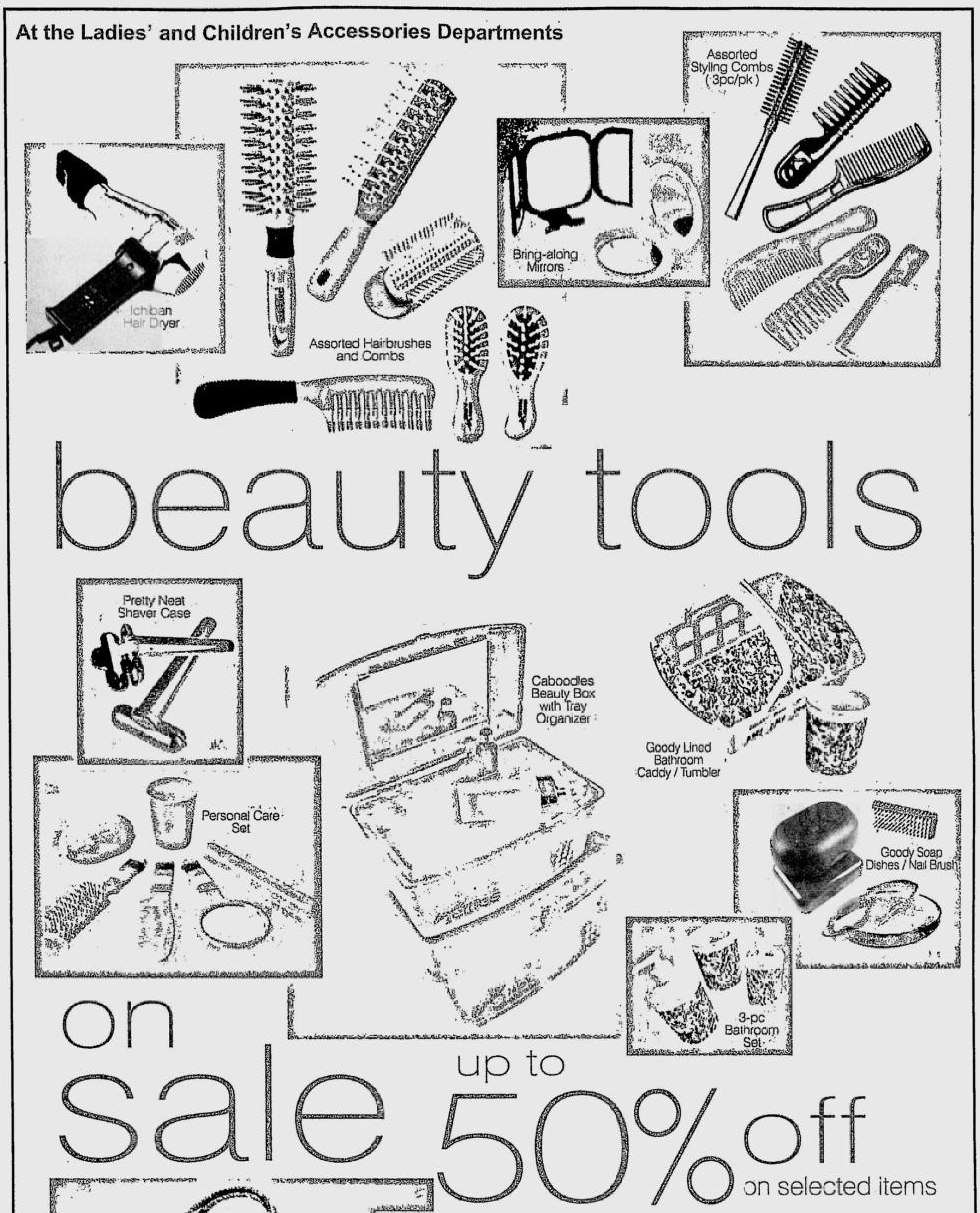
Extra concern

Sure. At a certain point, all the factory defects start to emerge. You begin to bond with your relatives about the diseases inherent in your clan. You take extra concern about blood pressure, uric acid and cholesterol content, and start taking interest in such interesting subjects as lymphoma, colon or breast cancer, Alzheimer's disease. You actually find more enjoyment watching a documentary of a tree sloth giving birth at the National Geographic Channel than enduring an MTV special on the making of U2's latest video. Even for the most pagan among us, we start reconsidering the role of God in our lives and really worry about the consequences of the life we led vis-à-vis the afterlife.

These are things a 20- or 30-year-old never thinks about. These are issues that flaky, air-headed, text-crazy, mall-prowling nymphets with their belly buttons on full display do not consider as part of their universe. You begin to frown upon the foibles of youth... But, God, what you would do to regain the original status of hairline, waistline, or even consistency of facial skin! Even if you have not procreated or nurtured children of your own, at a certain age you start behaving and thinking like a parent. You affirm the existence of the generation gap.

Suddenly you want to simplify. You begin to wonder whether all the fiery ambitions burning deep inside is really worth all your conscious hours. Yeah, sure, life is lonely at the top but the food is better. But it is at this point that you can no longer ram just anything in your mouth—because the oh-so-delicious *chicharon* with *laman* from Lapid's can already cause slight dizziness or heaviness around the area of the nape. Even bean sprouts or coleslaw gives you an attack of gout the next morning. You ask yourself if you really need all these shoes, bags, suits, the plethora of earthly possessions that have defined who you are or how far you have gone. You seek for programs to help you get in touch with your inner self because you want to be at peace not only with the world but also with yourself. The enlightenment period comes when what was once all too important has suddenly become just plain foolish. From plunderer or philanderer, you suddenly turn

VAIN/ p.D7



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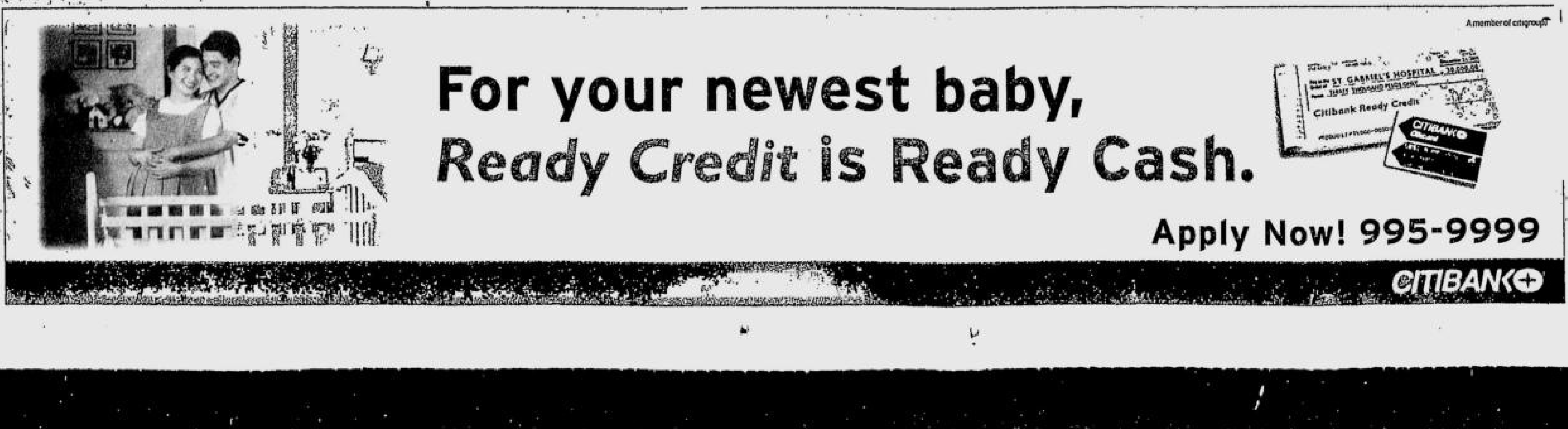

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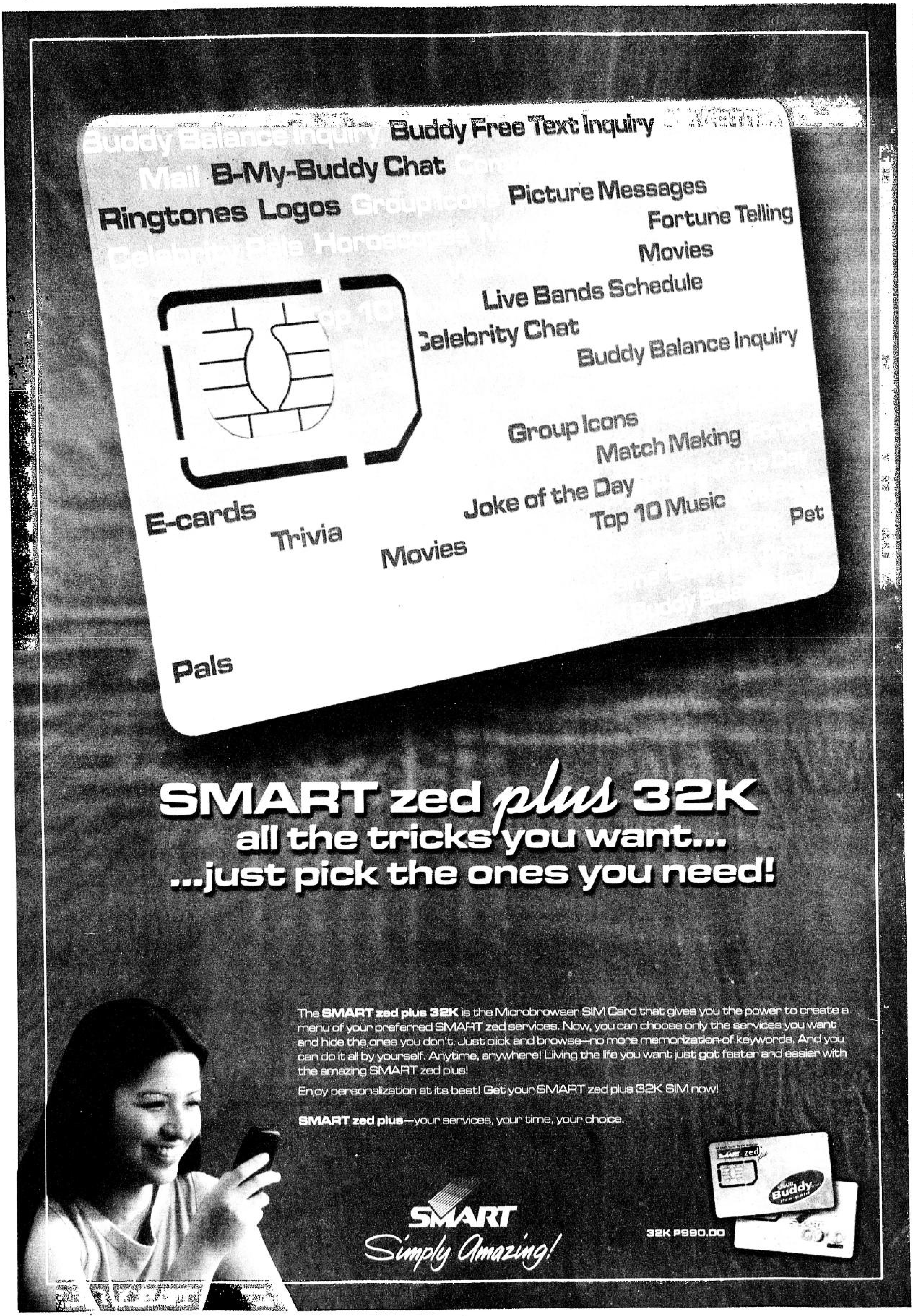
The new SMART zed plus SIM card – simply amazing!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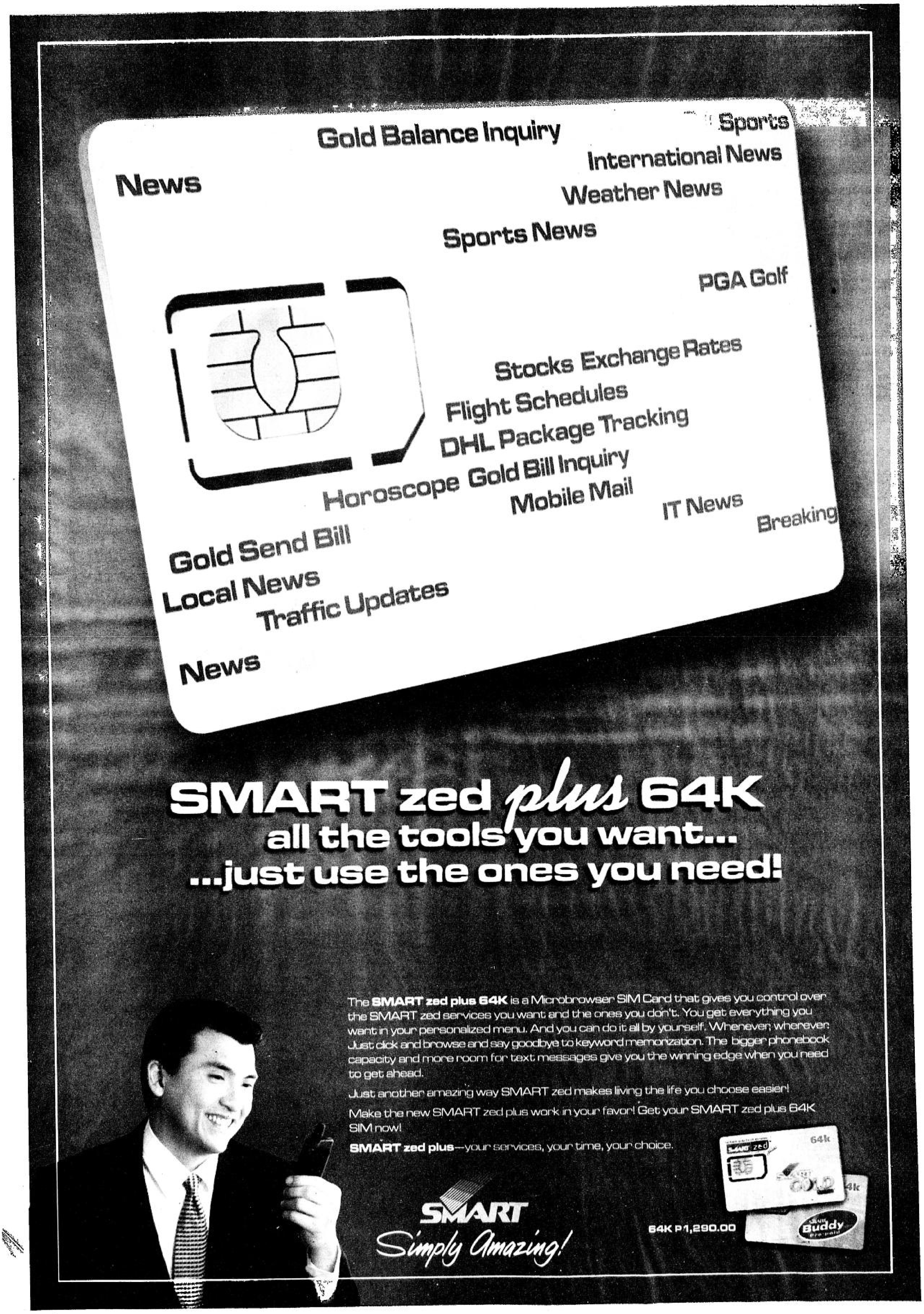
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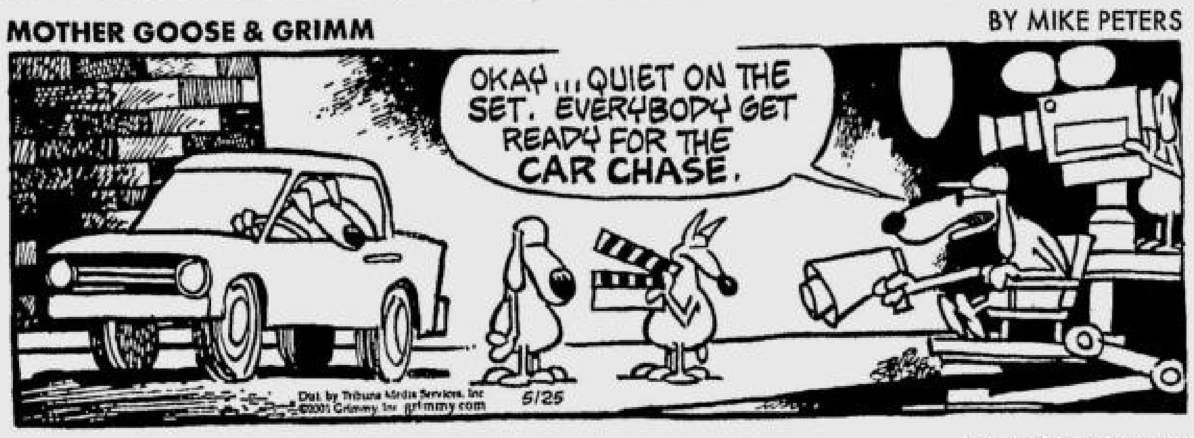
BY MIKE PETERS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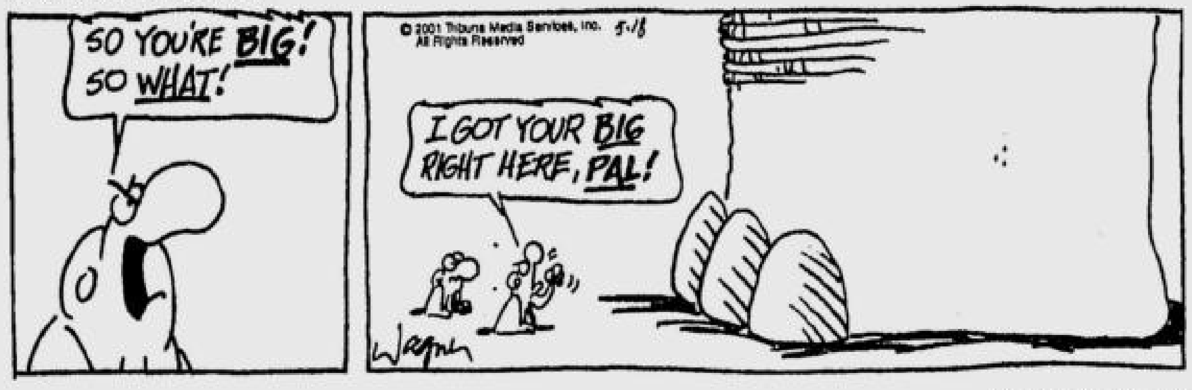
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER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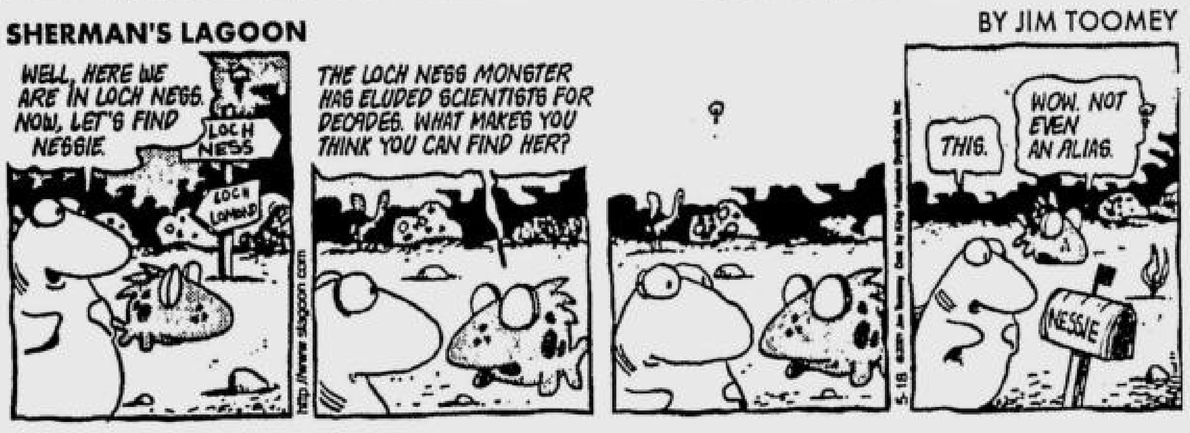
I GOT YOUR BIG RIGHT HERE, PAL!
Wagner

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WELL, HERE WE ARE IN LOCH NESS. NOW, LET'S FIND NESSIE.
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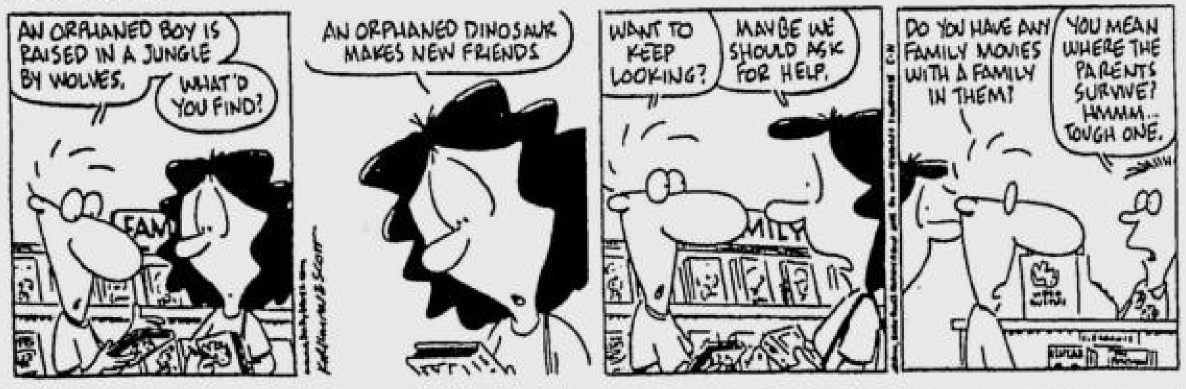
?
THIS.
WOW. NOT EVEN AN ALIAS.
NESSIE
5-18

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT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WHAT'D YOU FIND?
FAM
AN ORPHANED DINOSAUR MAKES NEW FRIENDS
WANT TO KEEP LOOKING?
MAYBE WE SHOULD ASK FOR HELP.
MILY
DO YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY MOVIES WITH A FAMILY IN THEM?
YOU MEAN WHERE THE PARENTS SURVIVE? HMMM... TOUGH ONE.
Kirkman & Scott

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

TCELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Meryl Streep, Kris Kristofferson, Ed Bradley, Bill Blass, Carson Daly, Cyndi Lauper

Happy Birthday: Your built-in sense of justice and fair play allows you to call things as you see them. Since you're ready to be successful, go ahead. Believe in yourself and don't be shy. Give in to your creative talent and let your intuition lead you in a positive direction. Your numbers: 6, 14, 19, 26, 31, 34

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You need to spend some quality time with the one you love. The uncertainties that have been plaguing your relationship can be taken care of. Stay calm and so will your mate.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Drastic alterations in your personal life are evident. You will not be in the right frame of mind to make hasty decisions. Re-evaluate your motives.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll probably have to make a quick financial decision. Have an amount in mind and don't go over budget. Don't let anyone talk you into being a partner in this venture.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Disagreements with female colleagues lead to problems with your boss. Don't confide in relatives who have a tendency to meddle in other people's affairs.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be in love with life. Your positive attitude and happiness will be obvious to others. Take things one step at a time and build a solid, stable relationship.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Organizational activities may be taking up too much time. Pace yourself carefully as your vitality will be low, leaving you open to minor ailments. Look over personal finances before spending.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): There will be lots of activity going on around your home. Try not to get too upset with your family because they don't always want to do what you prefer.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If you aren't traveling, you'll be dreaming about it. You should spend time conversing and actively participating in mental and physical endeavors.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Minor health problems will not be as bad as you first thought. You may be a tad run-down, but nothing that a little rest and relaxation won't cure.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Social events will encourage romantic encounters. Deception within relationships is evident, though. Be careful not to be consumed by someone who is charming but untrustworthy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Someone you work with will give you a hard time. Be careful not to divulge personal thoughts. Get your work done and take off for the weekend. You need a break and more time with loved ones.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Social and romantic activities will be in a high cycle. Reasonable speculation should be lucrative. Tending to the affairs of children will pay off in love and admiration.

Birthday Baby: You have an innate charm that will bring you all sorts of attention throughout your life. You are caring, sensitive and always willing to lend a helping hand.

DAILY CROSSWORD

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14 Sometime hence
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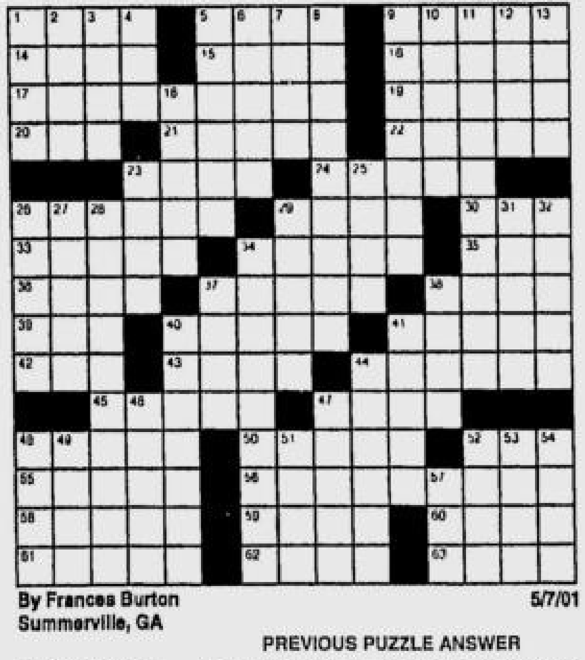
19 Face the day
20 "Star Wars" pilot Solo
21 Actress Della
22 Adores
23 Quaker William
24 Stage type
26 Prince of Denmark
29 Leave text in
30 Light knock
33 So to be heard
34 Army vehicles
35 Actor Wallach
36 Urban renewal target
37 Same again
38 Soccer great
39 Kiddy
40 Entertainer Lenya
41 Vestibule
42 Ordinal ending
43 Eight: It.
44 Primps
45 Ordinary writing
47 Prepare for finals
48 Walt Disney's middle name
50 Aired again
52 Vette or Caddy
55 "Superman" star
56 Obsequious fawner
58 Knights' weapons
59 __ Bator
60 Actor Arkin
61 __ we all?
62 Comes down with
63 Stand open

DOWN
1 Sprint
2 "Diana" singer
3 Cut of meat
4 Quaint hotel
5 Flair
6 Outsider
7 Swindles
8 Intimate chat
9 Ski lodges
10 Hammerin' Hank
11 Snoop-for-hire
12 Highland tongue
13 Deli breads
18 Liberated
23 Potential prune
25 Collection biz
26 Undue speed
27 Assign
28 Spokesman for an unsavory character
29 Heated argument
31 Woody or Steve
32 Boardwalk extensions
34 Strenuous acrobatic dance
37 Periods
38 Composition in verse
40 Most limber
41 Mary of "Newhart"
44 Jumbo shrimps
46 Poe bird
47 Zagreb inhabitant
48 Ms. Bombeck
49 Regan's father
51 __ Stanley Gardner
52 Coke or Pepsi
53 Pronto letters
54 Russo of "Tin Cup"
57 Old horse



By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

5/7/01

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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A	L	C	H	E	M	I	S	T	■	D	E	L	L	A
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I	B	I	D	■	S	E	A	T	E	D	■	S	T	A
E	L	B	O	W	■	S	H	E	A	R	S	■	■	■
R	E	E	C	H	O	■	■	■	S	I	L	I	C	A
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C	O	M	■	A	L	E	X	I	S	■	P	E	T	S
A	R	A	B	■	S	A	C	R	E	D	■	S	H	U
D	I	N	A	H	■	N	I	T	P	I	C	K	E	R
R	E	T	R	E	A	D	S	■	A	V	I	A	T	E
E	N	R	O	L	L	E	E	■	L	A	T	T	E	R
S	T	A	N	D	A	R	D	■	S	N	E	E	R	S

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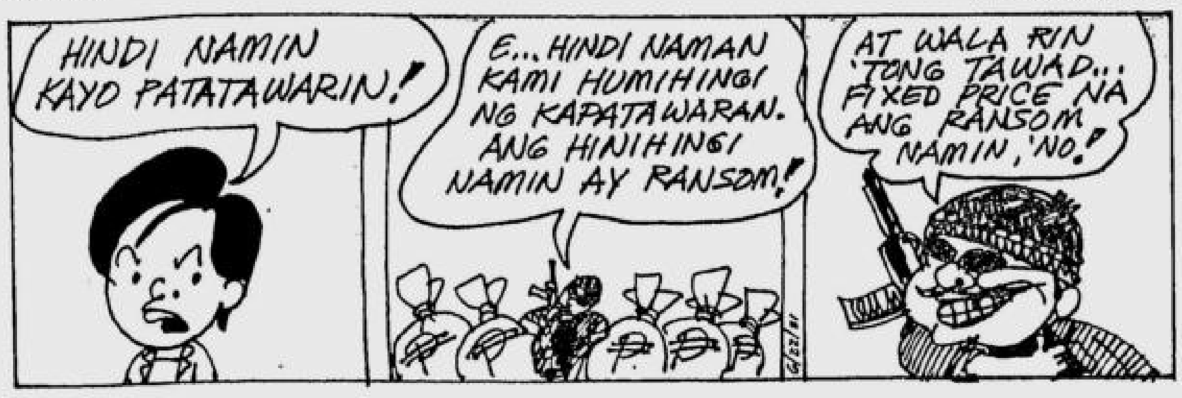
5/7/01

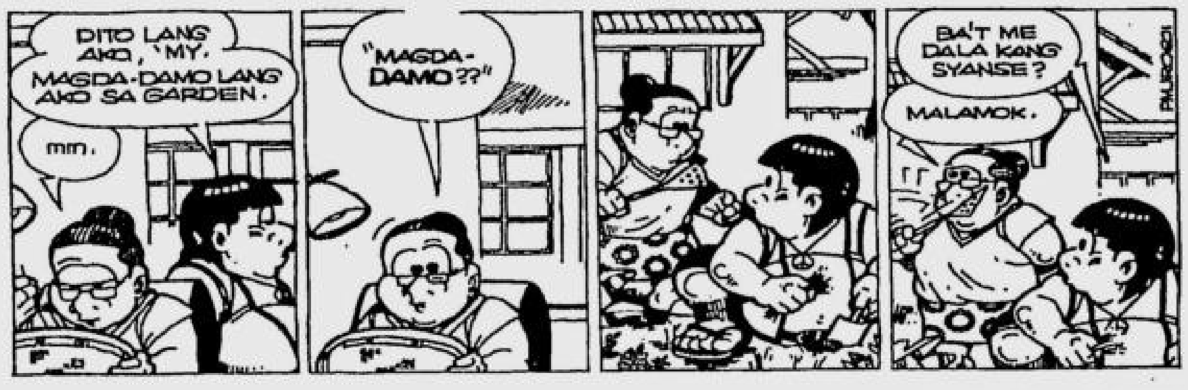
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HINDI NAMIN KAYO PATATAWARIN!
E... HINDI NAMAN KAMI HUMIHINGI NG KAPATAWARAN. ANG HINIHINGI NAMIN AY RANSOM!
6/22/01
AT WALA RIN 'TONG TAWAD... FIXED PRICE NA ANG RANSOM NAMIN, 'NO!

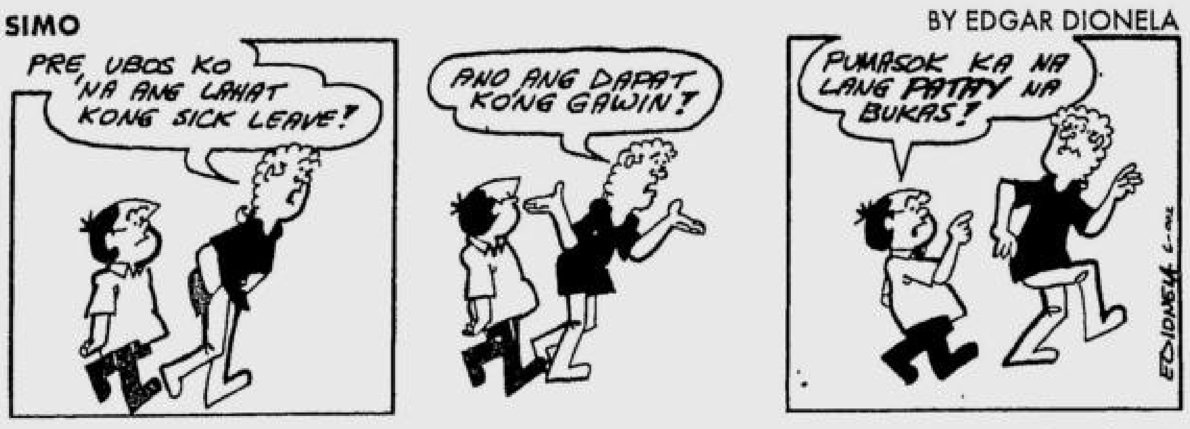
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DITO LANG AKO, 'MY. MAGDA-DAMO LANG AKO SA GARDEN.
mm.
"MAGDA-DAMO??"
BA'T ME DALA KANG SYANSE?
MALAMOK.
PMJR2001

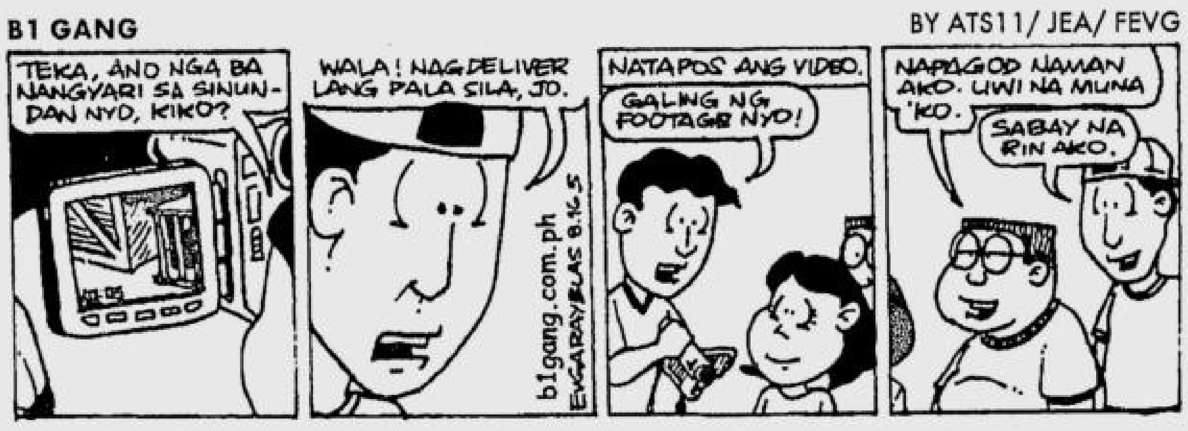
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


PRE, UBOS KO 'NA ANG LAHAT KONG SICK LEAVE!
ANO ANG DAPAT KONG GAWIN?
PUMASOK KA NA LANG PATAY NA BUKAS!
EDIONELA

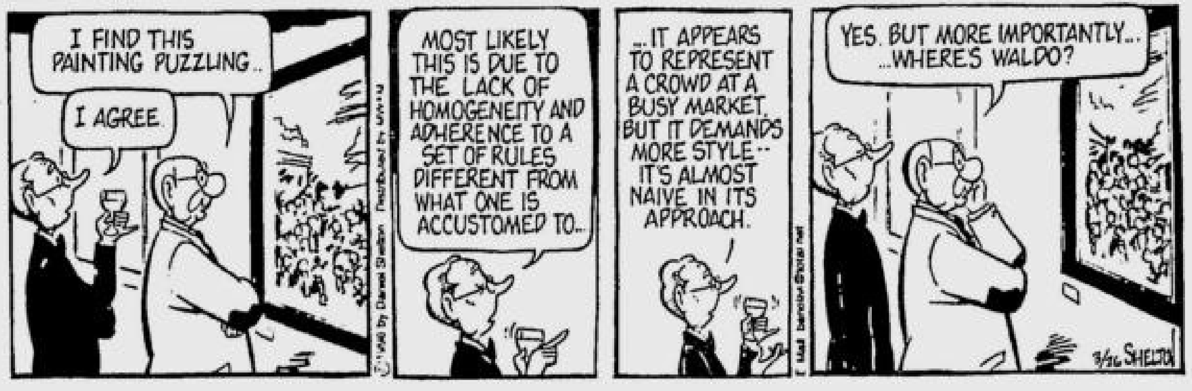
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


TEKA, ANO NGA BA NANGYARI SA SINUNDAN NYO, KIKO?
WALA! NAGDELIVER LANG PALA SILA, JO.
b1gang.com.ph
EVGARAYBLAS 8.16.5
NATAPOS ANG VIDEO.
GALING NG FOOTAGE NYO!
NAPAGOD NAMAN AKO. UWI NA MUNA 'KO.
SABAY NA RIN AKO.

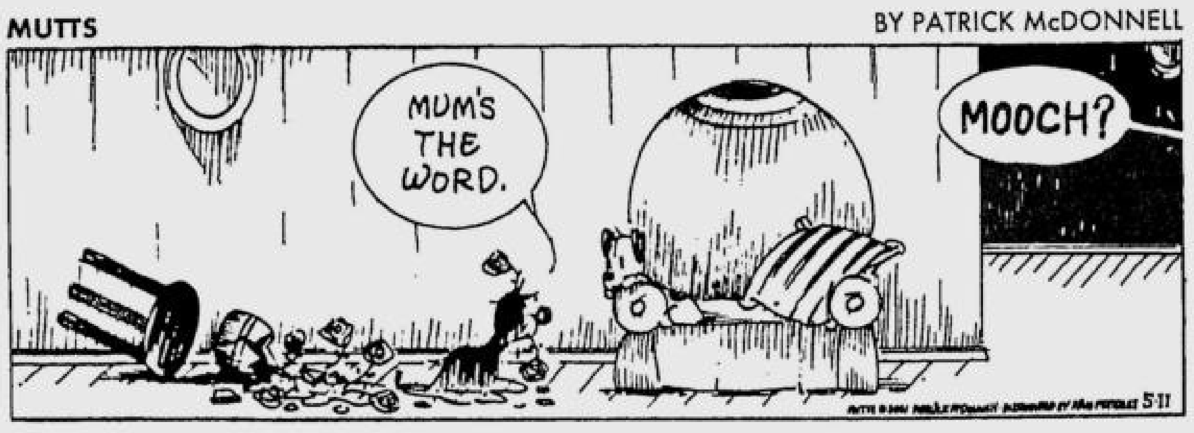
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I FIND THIS PAINTING PUZZLING..
I AGREE.
MOST LIKELY THIS IS DUE TO THE LACK OF HOMOGENEITY AND ADHERENCE TO A SET OF RULES DIFFERENT FROM WHAT ONE IS ACCUSTOMED TO..
..IT APPEARS TO REPRESENT A CROWD AT A BUSY MARKET, BUT IT DEMANDS MORE STYLE.. IT'S ALMOST NAIVE IN ITS APPROACH.
YES. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY... ...WHERE'S WALDO?
3/26 SHELTON

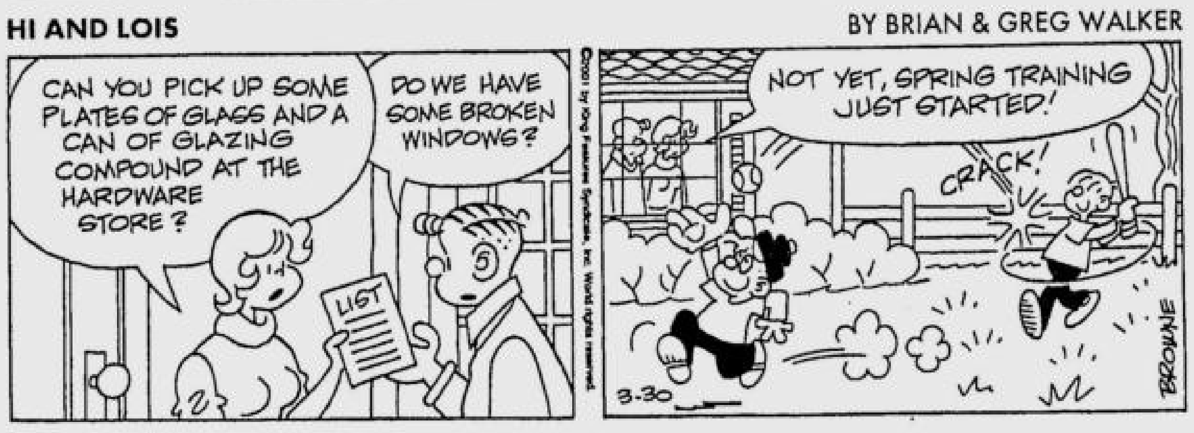
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MUM'S THE WORD.
MOOCH?
5-11

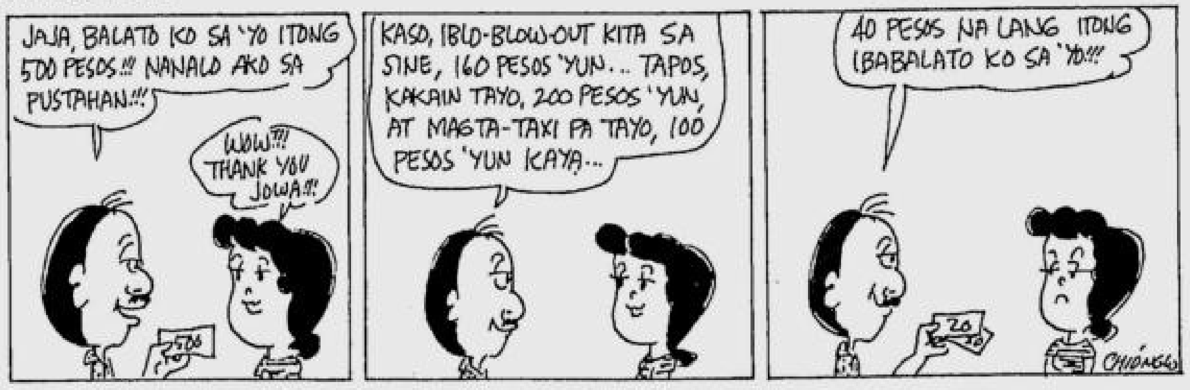
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


CAN YOU PICK UP SOME PLATES OF GLASS AND A CAN OF GLAZING COMPOUND AT THE HARDWARE STORE?
DO WE HAVE SOME BROKEN WINDOWS?
LIST
NOT YET, SPRING TRAINING JUST STARTED!
CRACK!
3-30
BROWNE

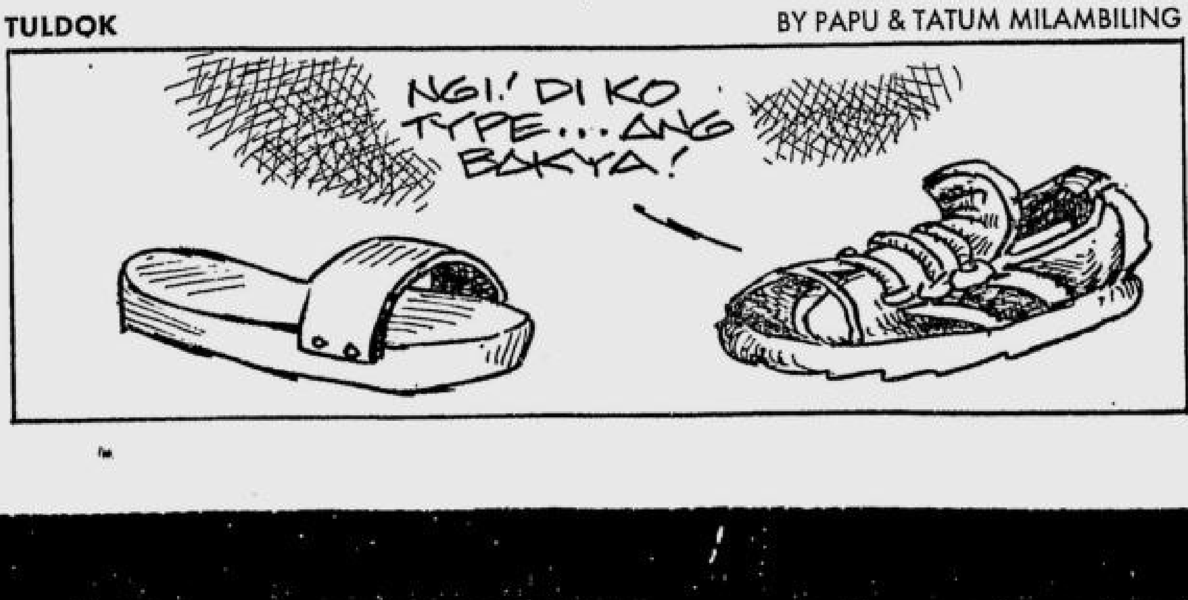
LOVEKNOTS

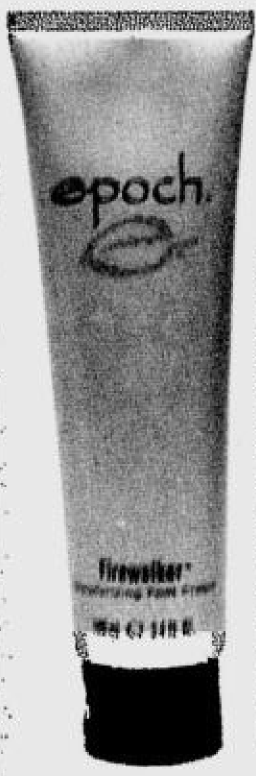
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, BALATO KO SA 'YO ITONG 500 PESOS!!! NANALO AKO SA PUSTAHAN!!!
WOW!!! THANK YOU JOWA!!!
KASO, IBLO-BLOW-OUT KITA SA SINE, 160 PESOS 'YUN... TAPOS, KAKAIN TAYO, 200 PESOS 'YUN, AT MAGTA-TAXI PA TAYO, 100 PESOS 'YUN KAYA...
40 PESOS NA LANG ITONG IBABALATO KO SA 'YO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NGI! DI KO TYPE... ANG BAKYA!



FEET'S FRIEND. Nu Skin Launches Epoch Firewalker Moisturizing Foot Cream. It is made from natural ingredients like Hawaiian *ti* plant extract, traditionally used by Polynesian firewalkers to absorb heat and cool and soothe the skin. The product is enriched with *babassu* oil for moisture.

Little gems for the feet

WHILE the footwear for the season shows a lot of skin, it is also dressed up with little gems of eclectic color. That's the statement at Via Venetto.

Italian line Vicini has classic thongs studded with flowerettes of colored crystals and stone. Rene Caovilla, another brand from Italy, adorns the straps with Swarovski crystals. The house label Via Venetto is feet-baring, but color is the more pervasive focus. There are shiny lime green, red and tangerine flat thongs in Italian nubuck and suede, and low-heeled slides in variations of the thong in blue and green accents.

Robert Clergerie of Paris has white blocks of incredibly light rubber unit soles topped with sturdy elastic, translucent rubber straps and classic sandals with backstraps and silver accents on the inner heel.

Via Venetto stores are located at the Greenbelt Mall; Glorietta 1, Ayala Center; Alabang Town Center; SM City North Edsa Annex and SM Megamall A.

Vain and vintage

(From page D3)

philosopher, and everyone begins to secretly ask questions if you have turned nuts.

Attraction

Ah, but then all these consolations and ruminations seem so insufficient when the truth about your mortality hits you right smack on the face. Worst is when you feel an attraction for somebody younger. And at that certain point in your life, you realize that about 70 percent of the attractive population are definitely younger than you are.

If they like you, then you either play deaf/mute/blind or rummage through your knowledge of amateur psychology. It is either they want something from you (definitely not your mature body) or they are looking for a parent figure. If they don't even want to consider you, then it is because that is the logical thing to happen. As you add more candles on your birthday cake, your choices become fewer, but not necessarily of lesser quality. Acceptance, my dear, simple acceptance of the law of natural selection can give you the peace of mind you yearn for.

But you still give yourself a week or two of feeling absolutely miserable because you know the object of your affection attaches a very polite *po* or *ho* each time he or she speaks to you. What is worse is when someone you pine for starts calling you *tito* or *tita*. Refer to the character portrayed by Kevin Spacey in "American Beauty" and you get a clearer picture of the rut you are in.

But then you are only as old as you think you are. Life can be made more miserable if you are fixated on numbers: savings in the bank, cars in the garage, return of investment, rate of interest. Remaining young does not necessarily mean miming the ways of the youth. By being in touch with everything and refusing to be bogged down by categories and prejudices of society, you can be as youthful without indulging in the ridiculous.

Spirit

Age has got nothing to do with the wrinkles on your face but the spirit you kindle in your heart. Wow! That really sounds like a lot of crap. But then being is old is nothing more than setting limits to yourself, projecting some silly self-image that you have to fit into that mold that hypocritical society sets for you. As long as you are past 40 and avoid dressing like Jolina Magdangal or Carlos Agassi, then you are still okay. As long as you willing to learn and experience something new in spite, despite and because of your age, then you'll never stagnate.

Yeah, sure. As you grow older, you are expected to mellow. But then, like a fruit, when you mellow, you eventually rot. So opt to be a happy pickle.

It is true. Life indeed begins at 40. This is because you understand life better when you have gone through enough and still want to go through more. The experimentation of the 20s and the drive of the 30s should prop up the wisdom of midlife. And all the while, the lesson meant to be taught was never that complicated. We only tended to convolute the message. Simply put: You can't have everything. But there is no harm in trying.

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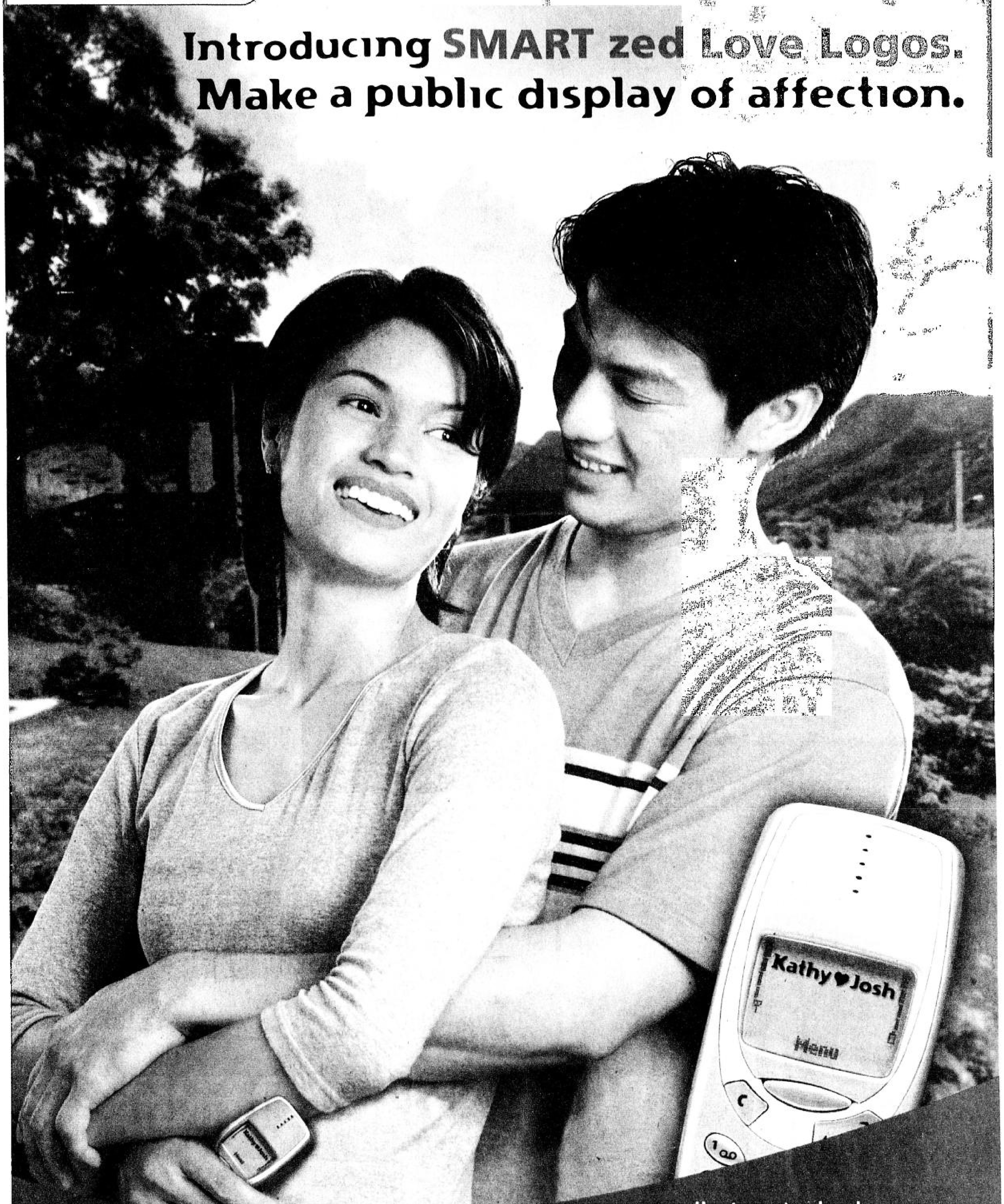

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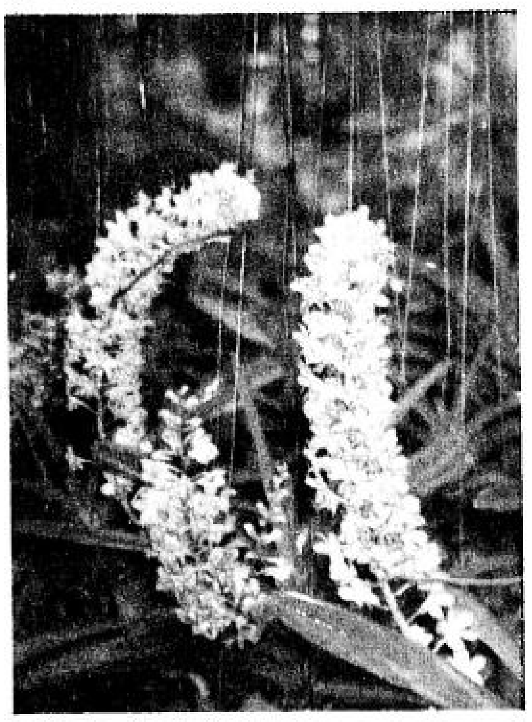
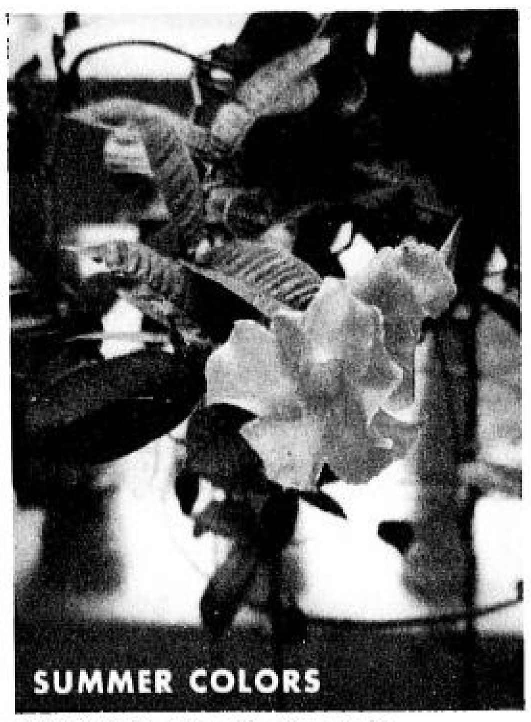

HYBRID dendrobiums



THE RAGE: hot pink allamanda

PURPLE is the color of the season.

This multi-sensual city is resplendent with orchids, palms and topiaries

Gardens are Bangkok's little-known tourist attractions

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ADRIAN V. LIZARES

ONCE again, Bangkok! Each trip to one of my favorite cities usually results in an ephemeral haze that ends as the plane lands on the runway at the Naia. Each trip to BKK is always filled with myriad activities creating enough memories to give you that feeling of tranquility for the next couple of weeks—that is, before you start packing that psychological suitcase as you succumb to yet another attack of the travel bug!

GARDENS/p.E2

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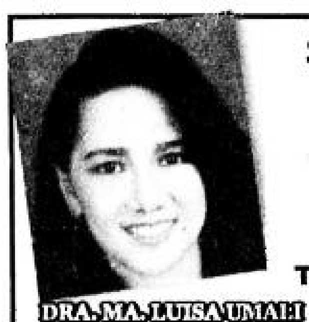
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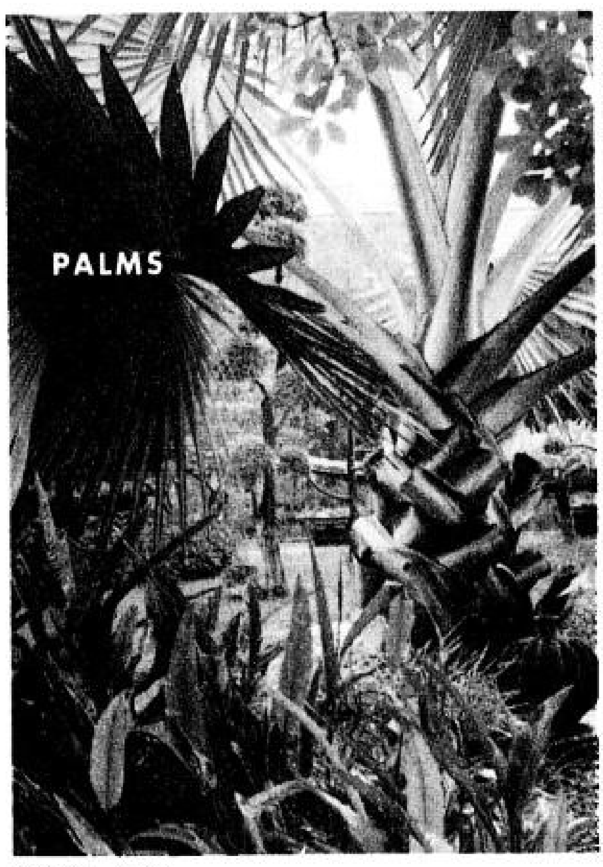
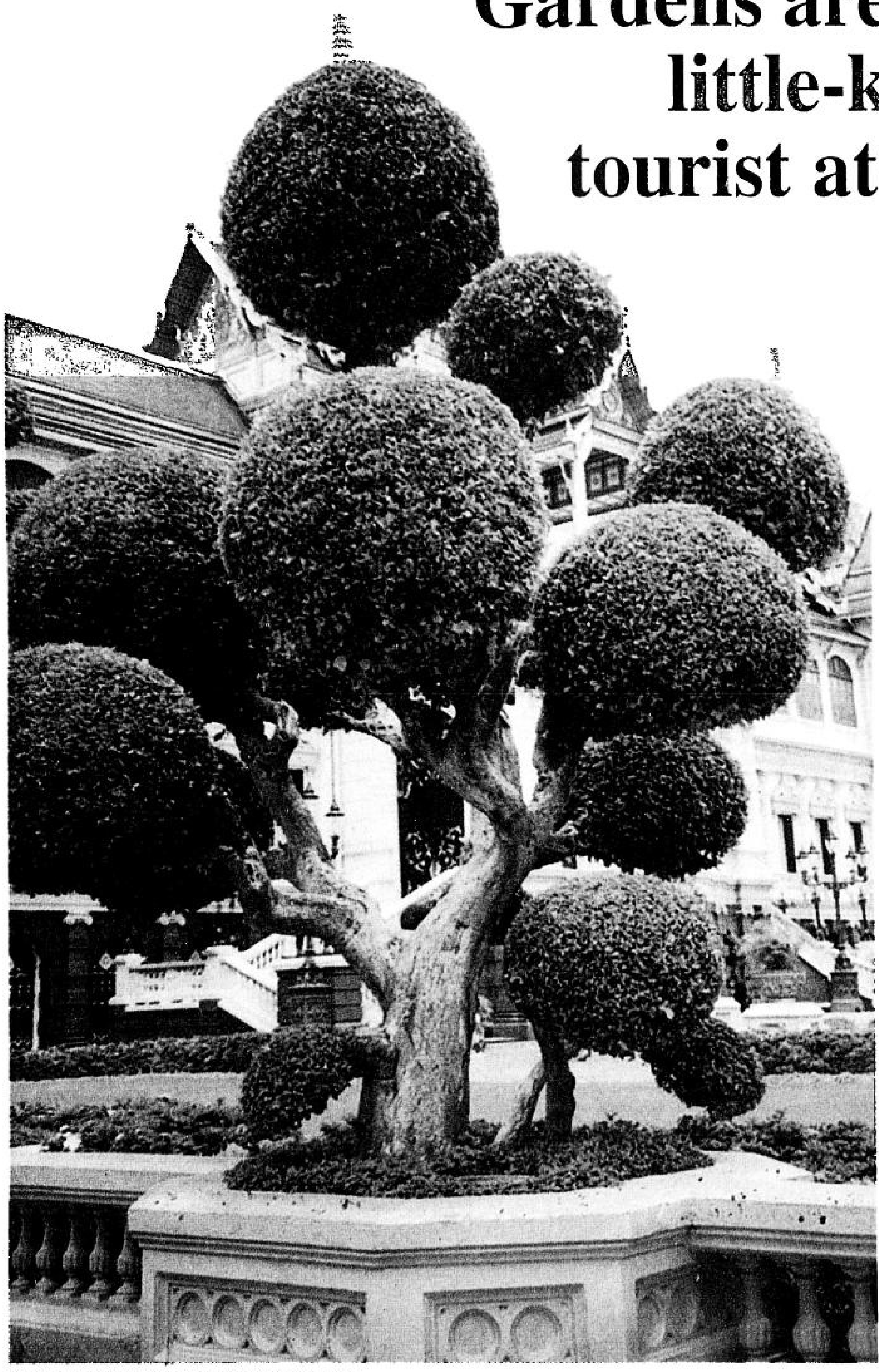


SABAL palm

Gardens are Bangkok's little-known tourist attractions



STREBLUS asper in traditional mai dat style

UBIQUITOUS lotus

TAMARIND trees

(From page E1)

Bangkok is a multi-sensual city, seen in the many aspects of everyday life. Cabs reek with a cloying yet vaguely familiar aroma, until you realize you are sitting behind bundles of *pandan* leaves, their version of natural aromatherapy—in a taxi. Not that you are likely to suffer stress from the Bangkok traffic, as it has now become a rarity. The heat of the tropical sun and the frequent monsoon rains are eased as one inhales the fragrance of avenues lined with Thai mahogany and tamarind trees clipped into cones, and sidewalks canopied by climbing *Cananga odorata* (ylang-ylang).

Thai culture has, for many centuries, drawn much symbolism with floral origins. Take Thai Airways and their stylized orchid logo, the jasmine garlands that make for good souvenirs while they last, and the lotus, the ultimate floral offering in most Buddhist cultures. Where there is Buddha, the lotus cannot be far behind. Flowers have been the Thai way of welcoming visitors.

Unique Siamese art form

Since I always feel so much at home in Bangkok, let us put all this aside and talk about the less-known but unique Siamese art form: Thai topiary, or *mai dat*.

What little information was recorded about Thai's horticultural history was lost when Ayutthaya, the former Siamese capital, was destroyed in 1767. Westerners, who visited the kingdom at its peak in the 18th century, provide detailed descriptions of exotic plants like the betel nut palm, the *durian* and the mango (which originated from India). The westerners described with precision the local architecture that sought to keep in harmony with its surrounding landscape. But the horticultural reports tended to conflict with each other. On the other hand, Philippine flora has been properly documented both for aesthetic and practical, most likely medicinal, purposes by Father Blanco through his botanical studies (which are still available at the San Agustin Museum).

In discussing ancestral Thai gardens, it is best to keep in mind three distinct categories: those of Buddhist monasteries, the royal palaces and homes of ordinary people. Buddhist monks would plant meditative gardens and must have at least one *boddhi* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) and some lotus. Flowering trees, too, were used like the native *saraca*. The rest of the plants were for medicinal purposes.

Palatial gardens were inspired more by Chinese models. Although most 18th-century artwork depicting traditional palace gardens were also lost, the Grand Palace gardens today, despite decades of re-landscaping, are probably a good example of this type—trees clipped into odd shapes, a distinctly Chinese form of garden art raised to another level.

The Thais now use clipped trees in designing traditional-style gardens, an art called *mai dat*. This form of topiary was practiced in the 13th and 14th century in Sukhotai, the country's first independent capital. Many plants are utilized to achieve this form, the most common being *Streblus asper* (whose leaves are also used in making paper), the tamarind and *Wrightia religiosa*, which has scented flowers.

Different from bonsai

Several styles evolved during the Ayutthaya period, including the odd number of leaf formations emerging from each trunk. The resulting miniature is mostly displayed in pots like bonsai, but the two art forms are very different. Bonsai aims to imitate in shape the original tree, while *mai dat*, in a pot or as part of a landscape, is angular and has a tendency to be abstract. Like Thai floral arrangements, the art is geared more toward recreation rather than a replication of nature.

Traditional royal gardens in Thailand use the *mai dat* either in pots or planted on the ground with well-placed rock formations, also a common practice in the country. Private gardens within the palace are enclosed affairs only for members of the royal household. They feature trees like the *champaca*, jasmine and especially the *Mimosops elengi* (Spanish *sapodilla*), whose flowers are used to scent garments and to make potpourri.

Most gardens in ordinary homes are basic—plants are meant primarily to be sources of food, like fruit trees or various herbs for cooking. As aesthetics is not a major concern, these gardens do not conform to concept or style of landscaping.

Garden trekking around Bangkok and environs is a relaxing and enlightening way to spend your holiday. You do not have to travel far to visit sights worthy of your time: Prasart Gardens, The Grand Palace, The Jim Thompson House and Lumpini Park.

But if you are more interested just in plants; especially the new hybrids, go to Chatuchak, Bangkok's famous weekend market, which becomes the biggest plant and flower show every Wednesday.

E-mail the author at adjie@pacific.net.ph

Senator Robert Z. Barbers
Back to Work with renewed vigor
SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE
June 24, 2001 Issue

'Bagsak presyo' festival at Manila Seedling Bank

By Tita V. Giron

THE RAINY season, according to Pagasa weather forecasters, has officially started. To the plant people, it is the official start of the planting season, which is why Manila Seedling Bank (MSB) garden center has launched its annual grand sale.

It is the one event eagerly awaited by the plant people, both hobbyists and growers, because prices of plants are slashed down to as low as 60 percent off. It is one occasion when propagation of previously rare plants are made available to the public at affordable prices.

"The *bagsak presyo* festival is held at this time of the year to coincide with school opening and ecology month when a lot of tree planting and gardening projects are going on. We want to supply quality-tested planting materials and the right kind of trees for these projects," explained Chito Bertol, chair of MSB.

MSB is on its 24th year. Situated at the corner of Edsa and Quezon Avenue in Quezon City, it is a 7-hectare complex with a tree farm, tree demo area, a bonsai park and garden center.

"It has been expanding over the years. More recently, it inaugurated a cutflower *bagsakan* covered market. And just this week, King Louis opened a flower and vegetable drop center that distributes freshly harvested vegetables and cutflowers from Benguet."

Bertol added that new garden and landscaping shops have relocated at MSB. It includes Flower Factory of Sandy Javier, Bulacan Gardens and King Louis' Baguio Growers. "We will have pets and water gardening stores, too," he disclosed.

What to find

Be forewarned. Wear your most comfortable walking shoes as you will need to walk a mile to visit all the stores and growing areas. We were told that the whole complex including the tree farm covers 7 hectares. As we discovered, practically all the stores have their own delightful surprises.

At the King Louis *bagsakan* center, we found out that the van of fresh cutflowers arrive at around 3 p.m. on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fresh Baguio vegetables are unloaded every morning on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Be early to avoid the crush of buyers, especially the pushy flower-shop people.

Don't go to the *bagsakan* center, however, if you're out to buy potted plants and garden-related products. These are available at the King Louis garden shop in another area. You will find the best liliums in town, also hydrangeas, African violets and *medinillas*. Also available are delightful Vigan jars of all sizes and shapes, terra-cotta pots, Mt. Pinatubo garden lanterns, woodcarvings and garden furniture. (Call 929-4110/4105.)

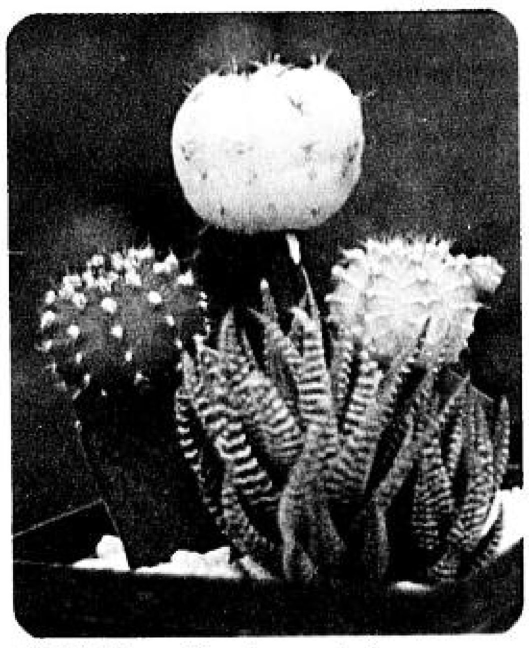
If you're looking for the multicolored grafted cacti, go to Purificacion Orchids and Ornamentals. There are also unusual cacti and succulents in individual pots or in dishgardens for indoor decor, blooming Hoya for collectors, staghorn ferns and a variety of orchids and bromeliads. (Call 928-4831.)

For a wide choice of begonias and plants with ornamental foliage, look for Chit Rufo's Rozart shop. She also sells wrought-iron planters.

HYDRANGEAS from King Louis

CACTI and succulent dishgarden

BURNAY jars and Pinatubo rock carvings


GRAFTED cacti and succulents

Varieties of blooming orchids are found at the Green World Orchids owned by Meding Arbis. She also sells cutflowers and curtains of live Spanish moss (Call 926-0699).

Bulacan Gardens is a veritable paradise for landscaping plants and accessories. It occupies a vast area where balled palms and trees are displayed along with native rocks and stones and a wide assortment of garden plants.

Tree seedlings

All the imaginable trees for reforestation, landscaping and fruit farming can be found in the vast growing and demo areas of MSB. Trees range in height from 1-6 ft and are propagated by marcotting, inarching, budding and grafting.

"We only mass-propagate quality-tested trees," Bertol pointed out. His kilometric list of trees include the following: *guapple*, *guyabano*, *langka*, carabao *lamao* mango, *mabolo*, Indian mango, avocado.

It is one place where one can find vanishing native species like *yakal*, *molave* and *kamagong*.

There are flowering trees, too, such as golden shower, Palawan cherry and fire trees.

Call Bertol's office for the kilometric price list, and for details of the ongoing *bagsak presyo* garden festival at 929-9312 or 924-7001.

COLORFUL begonias at Chit Rufo shop

CATTLEYA orchids at Green World Orchids PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

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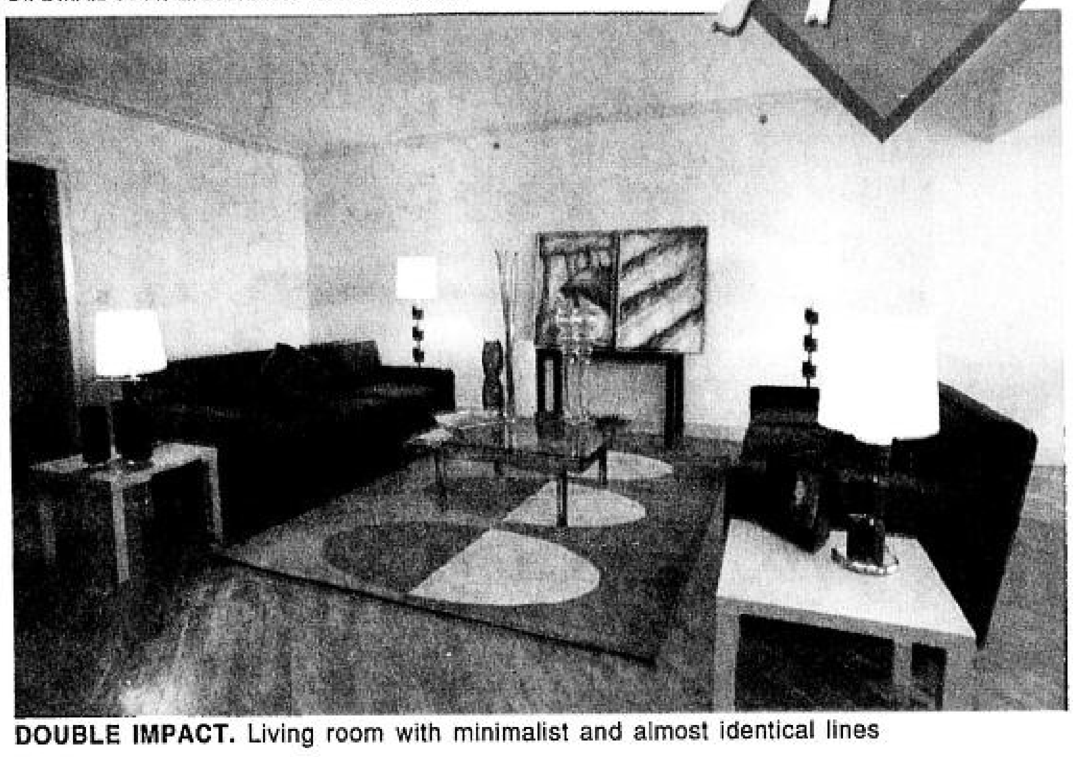


DOUBLE IMPACT. Living room with minimalist and almost identical lines

Be it ever so small, it can be a wonder

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Arthur de la Rosa

HANDLE WITH CARE. Glass-topped coffee table with Italian clear vases inspired by shapes from nature

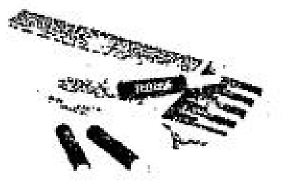
FORGET that sprawling mansion in Ayala Alabang. A growing number of newlyweds have discovered the simple joys of condominium living. Consequently, home stores such as Area have seen an increase in the demand for smaller, more versatile furniture and accent pieces that fit into limited living spaces.

Most young couples today are also willing to sacrifice space in favor of a smaller, supposedly cheaper dwelling near their places of work. "People nowadays live much simpler lifestyles," said Wilma Santos-Huang, general manager of Area Home Store. "The trend came about partly because of the shortage or absence of household help."

A growing number of men are also taking a more active role in furnishing the house, including the kitchen. Santos-Huang, for instance, has been catering to more and more men looking for quality cookware ever since the first Area outlet opened in 1994. "Many couples are also entertaining at home," she added, "although not in the grand scale our parents used to."

BE/p.F2

A condo unit can never be declared a disaster area once it passes the hands of Wilma Santos-Huang and Mariel San Agustin



Treat your hair right

Healthy, shiny hair usually comes second only to vibrant skin in making one look younger. Yet, many unwittingly mistreat their hair with unhealthy styling methods and agents. Call it vanity and good grooming, a growing number of men and women have been subjecting their crowning glory to a lot of stress all for the sake of looking better or perhaps, younger.

Take those who are gifted with natural locks for instance. They can easily alter their hair's character, albeit temporarily, by a simple visit to a straightening salon. Those endowed with straight hair, meanwhile can easily have their mane permed to suit their fancy. But chemical treatments like perms and straighteners, including tints, dyes, and bleaches, can make your hair dry and brittle. If not averted, this could lead to premature hair loss.

If you are among those who have been abusing their hair without knowing it, take a cue: treat your hair right or you'll lose it prematurely. Take heed especially if you've observed that your hair loss is noticeably plentiful; if your fallen hair is shorter and much finer than normal; if you have dandruff and scaly scalp accompanied or preceeded by the thinning of hair; if your parents, grandparents or blood relations are bald; if your hair is fine, brittle or altered; and if you have entered the critical ages of 20, 30, 40 or 50 (for men) or over 35 (for women).

Premature hair loss can be very distressing. Contrary to popular notion, shampoos and conditioners are not enough to keep your hair from falling. A regular trip to the parlor may not be of much help either. The good news is: you can prolong the life span of your hair with Foltène — a revolutionary hair care treatment from Europe.

Containing a safe natural ingredient — Trichosaccharide — Foltène deeply conditions the scalp by stimulating the circulation of blood and nutrients into the hair follicles without being absorbed into the bloodstream, thus halting excessive hair loss.

Foltène is so easy to apply. After shampooing, towel dry your hair then apply Foltène directly to the scalp. Do not rinse it off and do not shampoo again for at least six hours to ensure essential contact time. Use only one vial at a time. For those with excessive falling or thinning hair, undergo the attack and maintenance phase where you apply one vial every other day for 40 days (20 vials). While in the maintenance phase, use two vials per week for two to three months. For those suffering from dandruff, dry hair, split ends and oily or dry scalp, use two vials per week for three months to ensure healthier scalp. Resume the attack or maintenance cycle as needed to maintain hair and scalp condition.

Foltène is not a cure for baldness, however. It cannot revive dead hair follicles. What it does is normalize the oily and dry areas to encourage the growth of fuller, thicker and healthier hair. After a few applications, the external appearance of hair improves in qualities — shine, softness, manageability, volume and more importantly, healthier hair without premature hair loss.

So before your hair's condition enters the irreversible stage of baldness, treat the hair you still have with Foltène. Then you can stop losing hair over hair loss.

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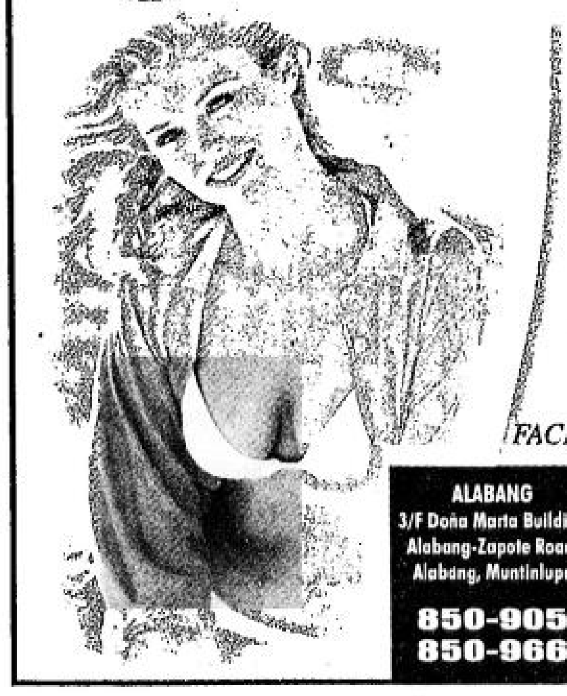

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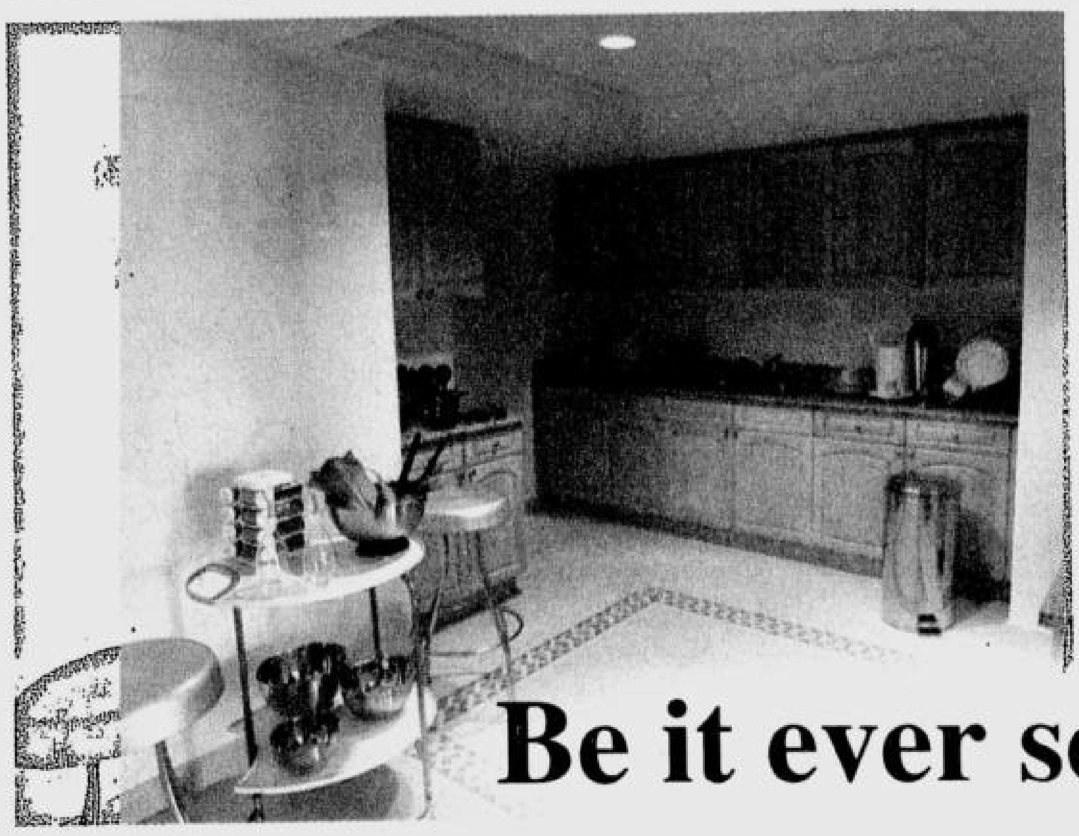
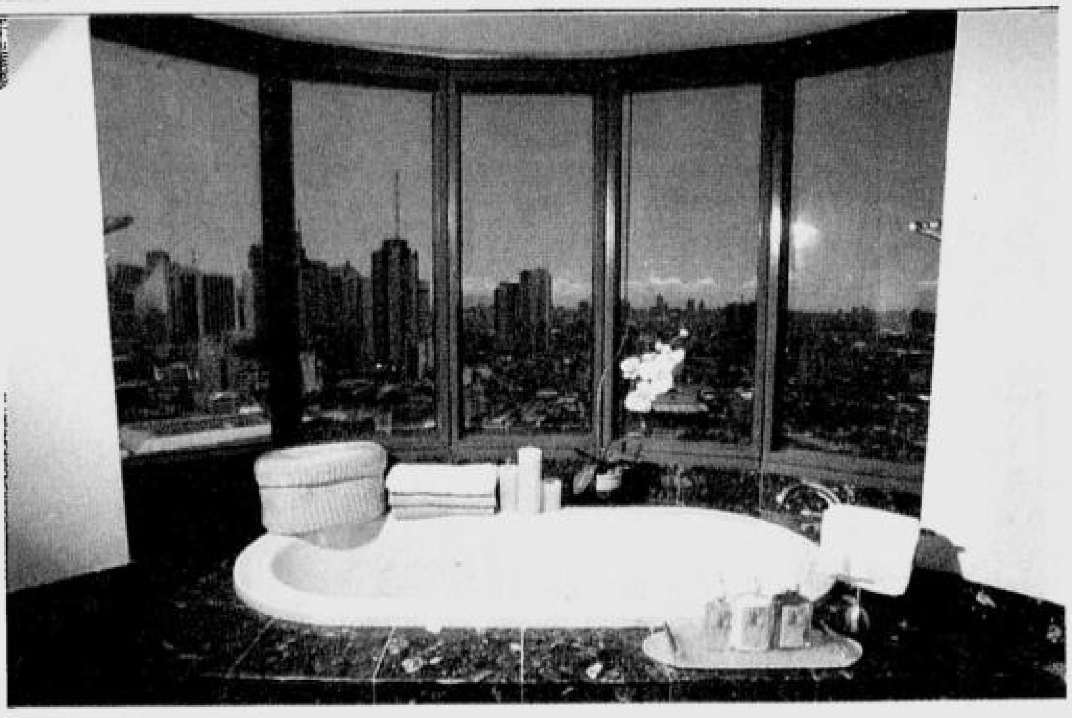


KITCHEN helpers



BATHROOM basics: Native towel basket, frosted vanity tray, brass towel holder and plenty of candles

Be it ever so small, it can be a wonder

(From page F1)

Area now has four branches, including its newest outlet at the Power Plant in Rockwell. Once it opens on July 13, the Power Plant branch will hold the distinction of being the first Kartell Point outlet in the country.

The Italian-based company sells furniture and accent pieces designed by some of the world's top designers: Philippe Starck, Antonio Citterio, Paolo Rizzatto, Ron Arad, Enzo Mari and Michele de Lucchi, to name a few. Except for Starck and Citterio, these names may sound Greek, er, Italian, to ordinary shoppers, but seasoned architects and interior designers the world over consider these artists as trailblazers.

"Most of their designs are hip," said Santos-Huang. "I'm sure they will appeal to young Filipinos." There are over a hundred Kartell Point outlets all over the world, she adds. Its regional office in Asia is located in Singapore. Although the Philippine store—a portion, actually, of Area's Power Plant branch—is much smaller than, say, the one in Singapore or Hong Kong, Huang promises to provide clients with diverse lines aimed primarily at condominium and townhouse living.

"Most of these pieces are streamlined and typically European," she added. "Like most of the items young couples go for today—light, clean and very functional."

Sleek and clean

To prove her point, Santos-Huang and Area merchandising manager Mariel San Agustin furnished a three-bedroom unit at Rockwell's Luna condominiums with existing pieces available at Area for the INQUIRER pictorial. Merchandise from Kartell Point has yet to arrive. Because of their compact size, Luna's condominium units are said to be popular among newlyweds and couples with small families.

Sleek and clean lines, the kind that easily adapt to constant changes in trends, dominated the living room. "Couples will find these quality pieces practical," San Agustin assured. The minimalist look is anchored on an area rug with contrasting circular patterns and two identical charcoal gray sofas facing each other. One side mirrored the other—from the identical lampshades down to a pair of white side tables.

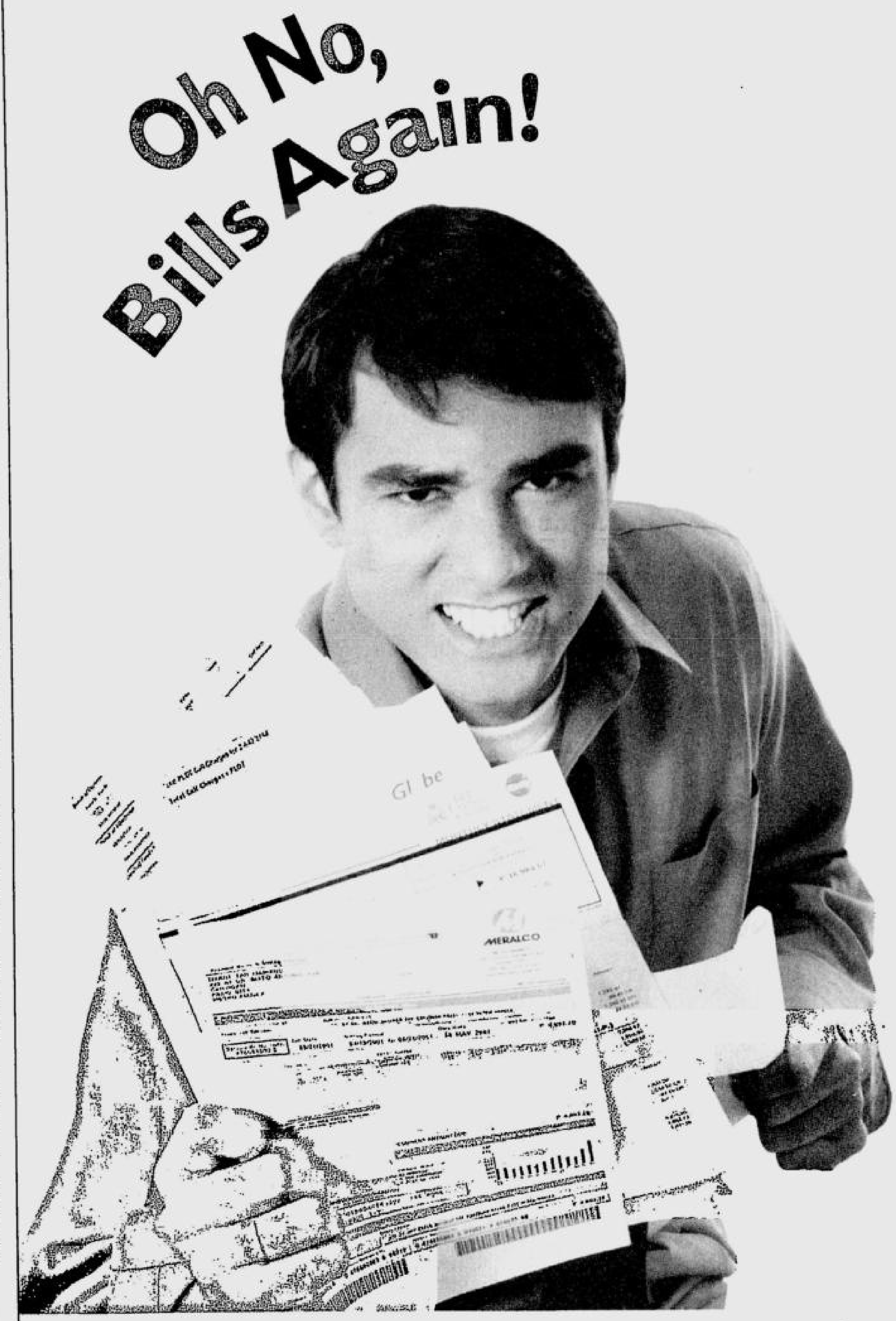
Differences were confined to the accent pieces on the side tables and a glass-topped coffee table. Torri and Giganti vases from Italy were made of pressed and hand-blown glass with designs inspired by nature. "We opted for dark upholstery because it's neutral and resistant to dirt," explained Santos-Huang. "The accent pieces are quite versatile and easy to move from one area to the other."

Another hallmark of condominium living is the limited space. Because of its size, the Wow table will have no trouble fitting in the dining room. It may look too stark, but the nondescript piece designed for two people can be extended like magic to accommodate at least four more.

"It's so easy," said San Agustin, as she unclasps both sides of the table. "You don't even have to remove the dishes to do this." A pair of Pack chairs in dark walnut by Timo Saarnio blended seamlessly with the award-winning table designed by Gruppo Grafite.

Accent pieces, however, need not always be small and unobtrusive. A giant Krypton wall clock, reminiscent of those found in a train station, hang by the dining room. "It tells the time and doubles as a conversation piece," said an amused Santos-Huang.

THE FOYER area with several clear vases and a glass-topped console table



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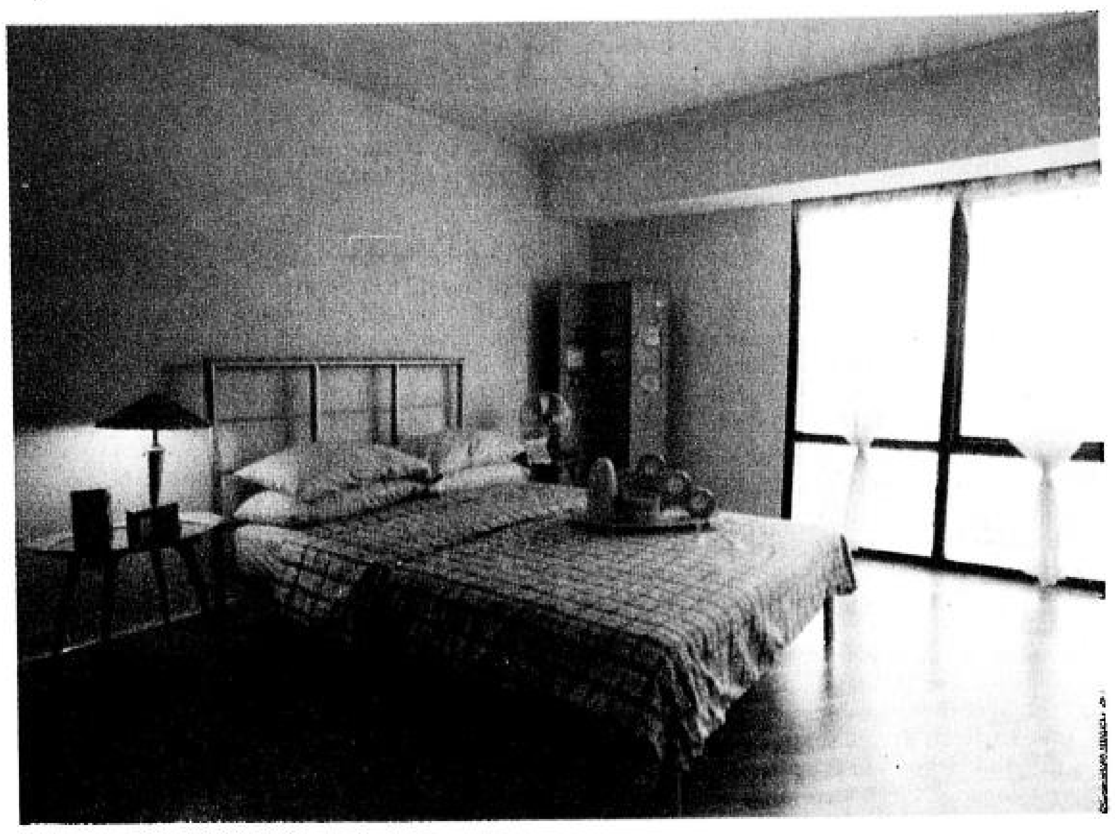
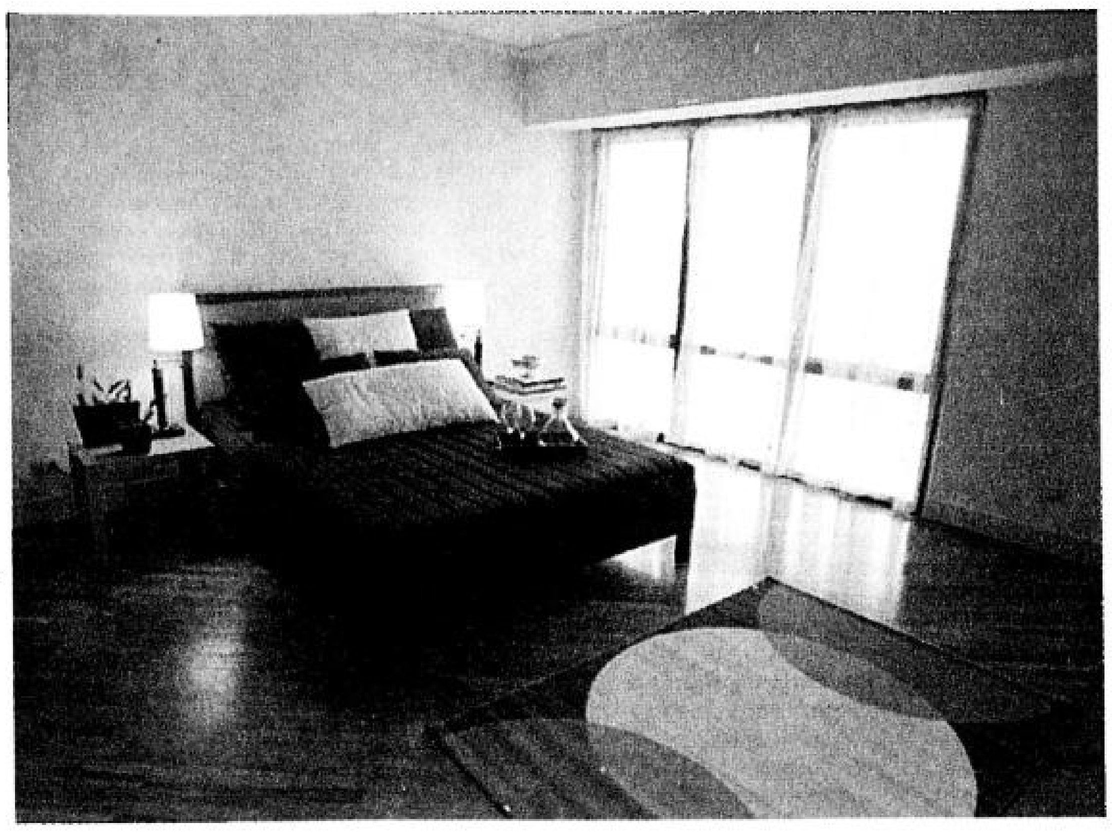


GUESTROOM assembles a mix of contemporary, country and retro pieces.



ROOM WITH A VIEW. Minimalist lines extend to the master bedroom, accessorized with blue and white linen and a pair of Stevens table lamp.

Every available space, however, counts in the kitchen. To maximize and brighten up the area, San Agustin used a clever trolley and plenty of chrome, pewter and stainless steel utensils.

The trolley, designed by Giovanna Mabanta, one of Area's owners, can be folded and stored in a corner when not in use. Imported kitchen tools have won a number of international awards, said Santos-Huang, including one from the National Arthritis Association. "They're light, flexible and easy to grip."

Minimized clutter

Sleek and classic lines extended to both master and guest bedrooms. Aside from minimizing clutter, San Agustin was able to achieve an expensive look by limiting the color scheme to electric blue and white—from the comforter and pillowcases down to the area rug by the foot of the bed.

Accent pieces were confined to several wooden vases and a pair of US-made swivel lamps fashioned from wood and stainless steel that reflects current trends abroad. San Agustin opted to go a little country in the guestroom with a steel-framed bed covered with a pastel-colored plaid comforter. Area's signature picture frames that double as wooden dividers occupied one corner.

Save those ubiquitous monobloc chairs! Furniture made of plastic can look chic. The Rumba metallic blue table, for instance, is anything but metal. The two-piece American-made set is fashioned from recyclable thermo plastic that looks both elegant and durable, said San Agustin.

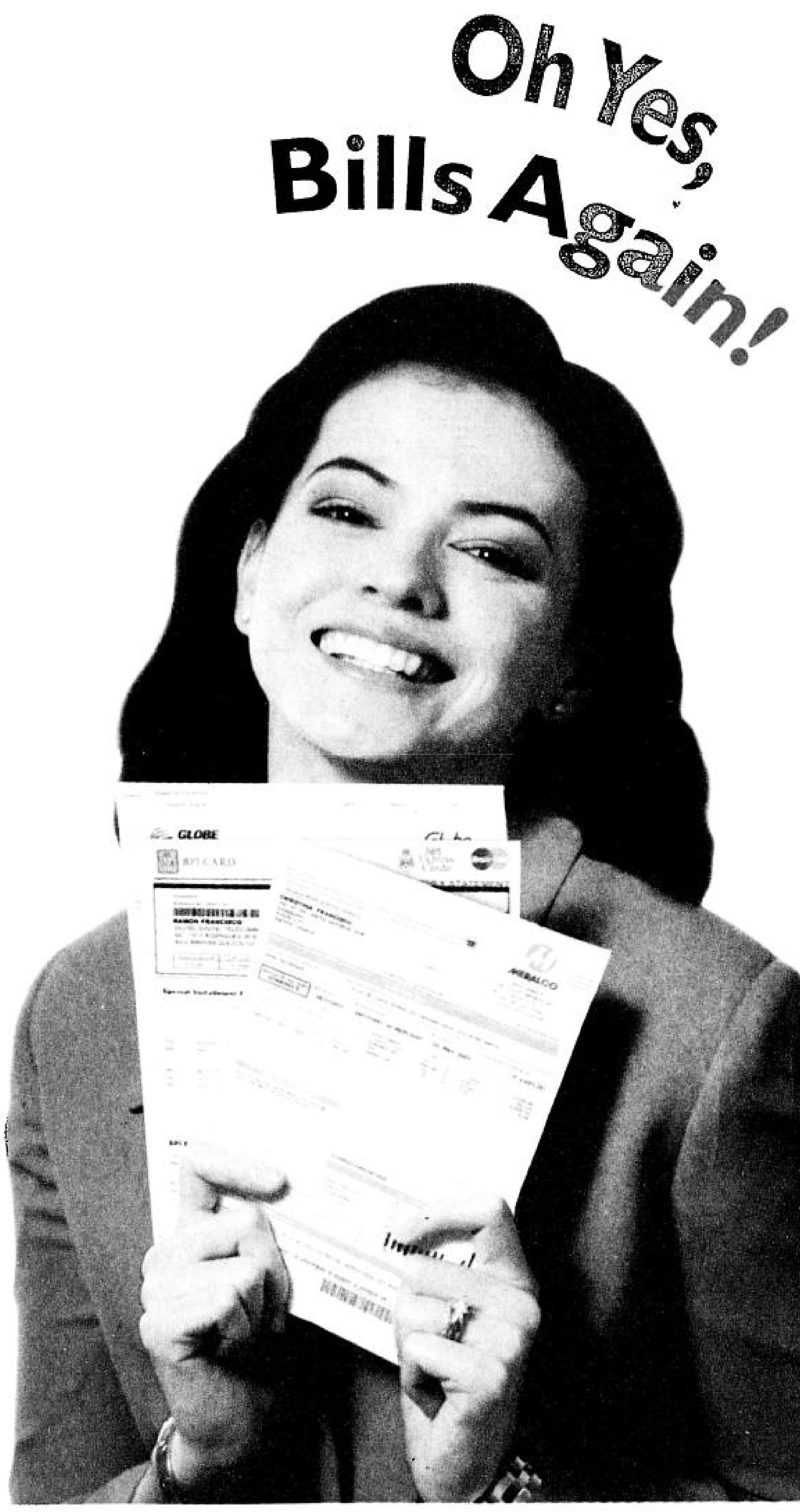
Oddly enough, the bathroom, at least in a Luna unit, is big enough to double as a small bedroom. What's more, the area has a sweeping view of old Makati. San Agustin spruced it up by lining the edge of the bathtub with several chic but functional items: A native towel basket, frosted vanity tray with metallic holders, brass towel holder and several blue candles. Yes, candles, especially those scented ones, so en vogue last year, are still in this season. Perhaps, more so now that the country is again undergoing uncertain times.

Area, by the way, also carries an aromatherapy line consisting of a body wash, lotion and body "blast" (body spray to the timid) called Seeds for the Soul. A warm bath is certainly an inexpensive and delightful way for couples to cocoon themselves from all the stress and pollution of the harsh world outside.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

CHINA and flatware from Italy

DINE ON TIME. The Wow table paired with a pair of Pack chairs. You have to be blind to miss the oversized wall clock by the wall.



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Looking for her father in Australia

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I need your help to find my true father. My father once lived here in the Philippines but moved to Australia because our country was in a big crisis way back in the 1980s during martial law. He did not know my mother was pregnant when he left. My mother wrote him, but he did not believe her.

When I was born in 1986 she sent him my picture, but he said she was a liar. (Incidentally, my mother's sister also gave birth that year, so my father thought the baby was not my mother's).

After some years, my mother again sent him my picture and told him I was named after his sister Marion, so I was named Ciel Marion Recuerdo. I use the family name of my stepfather since my mom had looked for a man who could give me his name when my father left her. The last letter my father wrote was in 1995, but my mother did not respond because she already had a husband.

I hope you can help me find my father. You are the only one who can help me. My mother and my relatives refuse to help me. His name is Melchor Calderon III and I don't know where he is in Australia. I need your help to find my father. I want to see and know him. Growing up without a real father is sad. Please, I'm begging you to help me. Thank you for reading my letter. Now I can breathe well.

CIELMAR

A friend will check with the Australian Electoral Roll and the Australian Population Index. I hope your father is listed there.

However, here is my unsolicited advice. Thank the Lord for the way your life is now. You have a stepfather who has helped to bring you up. Show him your love, respect and gratitude. Appreciate what your mother has done for you. It is understandable why your mother did not respond to his last letter—she was already a wife with a life to face.

I am publishing your letter for two reasons. You did not ask me to keep it confidential and there may be someone right here in the Philippines who knows just where he is.

Looking for an address in the US

DEAR reader who wants to know how to get in touch with a friend in the United States:

I wish you had mentioned his name. This is a small world; some other friend or relative may know. If you have an AT&T credit card, you can dial 105-11 and explain your problem. Just remember, they don't give free information. Or you can dial PLDT-108 and ask to be connected to an operator in that particular place. You will have to pay quite a sum for that long-distance call because you may have to be connected to several places before you get the answer.

On her daughter's debut

MY daughter will be celebrating her 18th birthday and I'm planning to give her the traditional debut party with the 18 roses and candles ceremony. But she says she does not have that number of close friends, i.e. 18 boys and 18 girls.

You see, she is a student of UST, but she finished her primary and secondary education here in the province. For this reason, her close friends are all scattered and enrolled in different schools in the province, while only a very few of them have chosen to go to Manila. Is there an alternative format for a debut party that you can suggest? Thank you and God bless.

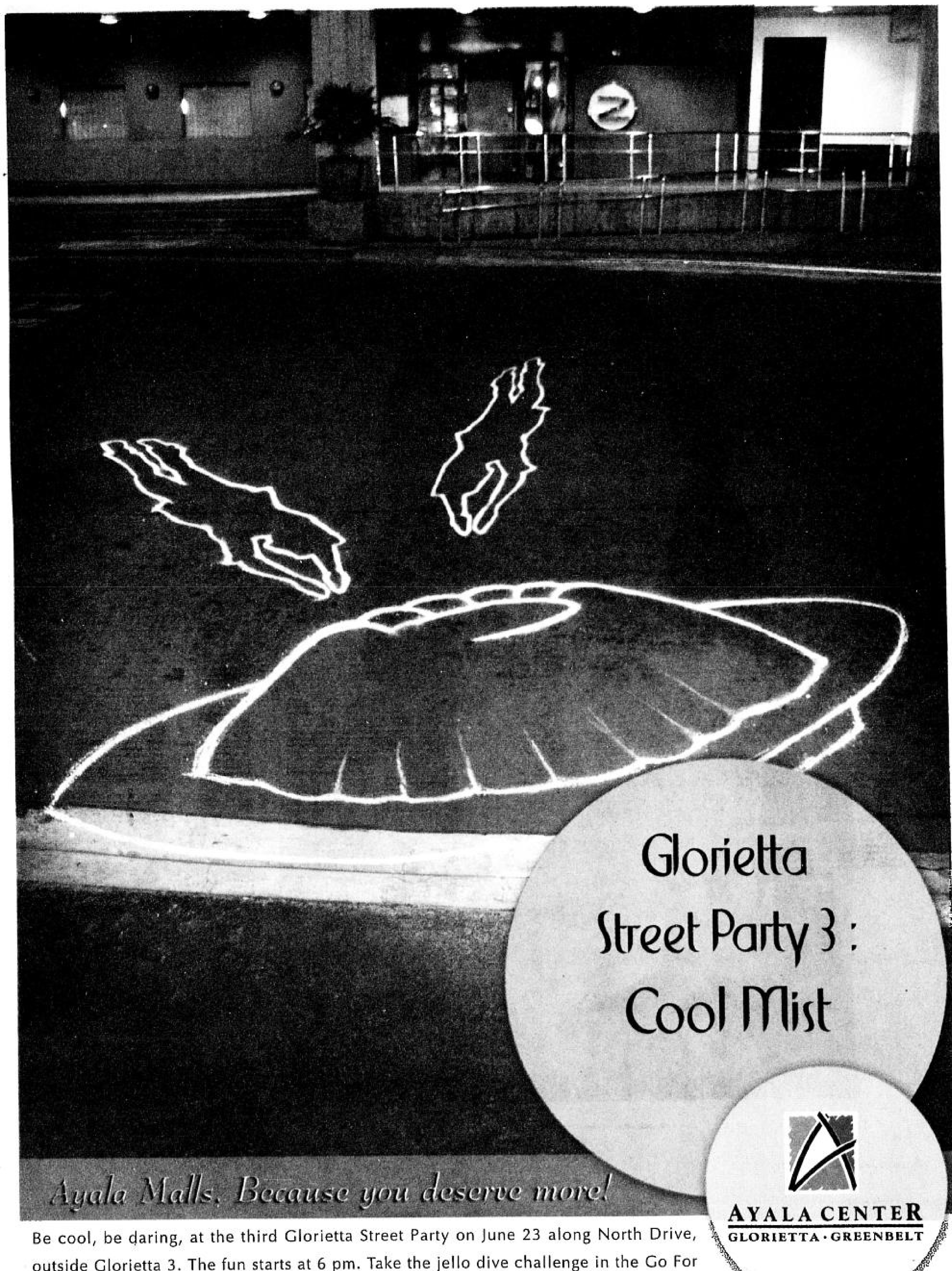
NENETTE

If her present classmates do not number 18 girls and 18 boys, then maybe you can just hold a more simple celebration, still with dance music, birthday cake, sumptuous dinner and giveaways. After all, let's think about the real meaning of a debut—to introduce the 18-year-old to society so she can be on the guest list of future affairs.

Also, with the current situation facing us, a simple gathering will be more appropriate. A formal invitation is, of course, expected, but if formal wear is requested, some invitees may beg off. If her classmates also come from other provinces, they may not have long gowns with them.

You may also have a special Mass celebrated in the UST chapel.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City



Be cool, be daring, at the third Glorietta Street Party on June 23 along North Drive, outside Glorietta 3. The fun starts at 6 pm. Take the jello dive challenge in the Go For It contest, Then scale new heights in the Wall Climbing Competition. And what better way to cap the evening than with a free concert featuring K24-7 at 10 pm.

WARNER MUSIC PHILIPPINES
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Davidoff Cool Water
MILD SEVEN
Ice Tea

Coming soon: A car powered by the sun

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

IT is scientifically acknowledged that global warming and climate change, already being experienced on this planet, are caused mainly by CO_2 (carbon dioxide) emissions. Countries like the Philippines have sought to avert the catastrophe that could result by passing Clean Air laws which, in many cases, may still be in need of implementation.

One company that sees itself directly affecting this environmental danger and is hard at work to seek a solution is the Germany-based BMW Group. What it has come up with is a hydrogen-run car, also referred to as a solar-powered car.

The car's future was explained in a corporate statement made during BMW's CleanEnergy World Tour 2000 that started February and goes on till July. It went: "The fuel of the future is hydrogen. In a completely closed cycle, it is extracted from water, and in combustion it becomes water once again. Produced with the help of solar power, hydrogen is the cleanest fuel of all... The hydrogen-powered engine [is] the most important development... in the longer term... Clean energy is the future."

If this is, indeed, true (there have been other inventors' claims that they had invented water or alcohol-run cars and nothing has come of them), then let's go for it. As BMW states further, hydrogen fuel is produced through electrolysis, which means its electricity, generated by the power of the sun, passes through water, breaks the water down into its constituent elements—hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen can then be stored in tanks. The result, BMW claims, is a zero-emission car, a vehicle that does not use any petrol at all. With it, mobility will be possible in an environmentally neutral form, thus preserving the earth's limited fossil fuels.

The hydrogen car continues to be tested even after it was launched at Expo 2000 in Berlin last year. It was actually put to use then for shuttle service, and proved suitable for everyday driving. So why are we only *hearing* about this phenomenal new car, not *using* it?

Conditions

Making the car and marketing it require several events to happen before the world can shift from crude oil to hydrogen. First, there are certain industrial, political and economic conditions to be met, one of which is the approval of governments. Aside from organizational hurdles, international safety standards must be approved. Only then will the automotive industry make necessary investments.

In safety tests, BMW engineers have established just what would occur once hydrogen is used regularly as source of energy. Fracture points, for instance, have been designed so that in case of severe accident, hydrogen can still be steadily and smoothly discharged without major hazards. In case of high-temperature fire, hydrogen will still evaporate and escape slowly and virtually imperceptibly through safety valves. The tests confirmed that hydrogen is as safe as petrol.

Hydrogen, we are told, can become a viable alternative to fossil fuel only when it can be produced using sustainable sources of energy. As the most sustainable is solar energy, the car manufacturer tested the photovoltaic generation of hydrogen and the application of this method for automotive purposes.

There are many benefits and advantages to be derived from a car of the future such as this, mostly from engineering and chemical standpoints. The CleanEnergy World Tour that took the hydrogen car to five cities—Dubai, Brussels, Milan, Tokyo and Los Angeles, each with some geographical or technical advantage—was meant to answer crucial environmental questions, the most crucial being what clean energy sources can be used that would not add to global warming or climate change, and also not affect human health, habitats, wildlife and economies around the world. Even as BMW seeks safe alternative fuels, it keeps one basic factor in mind: The fossil fuel reserves will not last forever.

The words of the 19th-century writer and visionary, Jules Verne, bolsters BMW's own vision. In his 1874 novel, "The Mysterious Island," Verne prophesized: "Water is the coal of the future. The energy of tomorrow is water broken down into hydrogen and oxygen, using electricity. These elements will secure the earth's power supply for an indefinite period." We can only sit back and wait.